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MEMOIRS

OF

EARLY ITALIAN PAINTERS,

AND OF

The Progress of Painting in Italy.

CIMABUE TO BASSANO.

1.—Giovanni Cimabue.

From a Portrait by Simone Memmi, in Sta. Maria Novella.

MEMOIRS

OF

EARLY ITALIAN PAINTERS,

AND OF

The Progress of Painting in Italy.

CIMABUE TO BASSANO.

BY MRS. JAMESON,

AUTHOR OF 'SACRED AND LEGENDARY ART,' ETC. ETC.

NEW EDITION.

WITH PORTRAITS.

LONDON:
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INTRODUCTION

Something About Pictures and Painters.

It is now about fourteen years since these 'Memoirs' of the early Italian Painters were first published in the form of detached essays.

The intention was to afford to young travellers, young students in art, young people generally, some information relating to celebrated artists who have filled the world with their names and their renown; some means of understanding their characters, as well as comparing their works; for without knowing *what* a painter was, as well as *who* he was, and the circumstances around him, and the age and the country in which he lived, we cannot comprehend the grounds of that relative judgment which renders even imperfect works most precious and admirable. These biographical essays were necessarily brief. Since they were first published the taste for art has been much extended: many works have appeared, some beautifully illustrated; and unnumbered reviews, and essays, and guide-books, from the pens of accomplished critics and artists, all facilitating the study of art; but the original purpose of this little book as a companion for the young, has not been superseded. The author has therefore prepared this new edition with great care. The references to examples have been made, wherever it has been possible,

to our National Gallery; and the number of valuable early pictures which have been lately added to our collection has rendered these references and descriptions much more intelligible and interesting to the young student than they were a few years ago. Many remarkable pictures have since changed hands; all the arrangements in the Gallery of the Louvre at Paris, in the Florentine Gallery, and in that of the Academy at Venice, have been altered within the last ten years. It has been necessary, therefore, to correct the references with some regard to the existing arrangements and the numbering of the pictures in all these famous galleries. Of course it has not been possible in this little work to enter into disputed points of criticism or chronology; but the author has profited by two recent visits to Italy, and more particularly by the last excellent edition of Vasari,[1] to add several new biographies, and to render these Memoirs altogether not only more interesting, but sufficiently accurate, considering their comprehensive and popular form, not to mislead the inexperienced student on questions relating to particular pictures and individual artists which remain to be settled.

And with regard to pictures, let it be remembered that, although a knowledge of the name, the character, the country of the painter, adds greatly to the pleasure with which we contemplate a work of art, it is not—it *ought* not to be—the source of our highest gratification; *that* must depend on our capacity to understand the

[1] The edition published by Le Monnier, at Florence, in 1846-1857.

work in itself, and have delight in it for its own sake. Our first question, when we stand before a picture, should not be, "Who painted it?" but "What does it mean?" "What is it about?" "What was it in the painter's mind to express when he thus embodied his thoughts in form and colour?" We should be able to read a picture as we read a book; and a picture has this advantage over a book, that the significance is not expressed in written or printed *words*, which are mere arbitrary signs of human invention, but in forms and colours, which are the creation of God. Imagery, whether in painting or sculpture, was a means of imparting instruction as well as delight long before the art of writing existed, and painting was brought to a certain degree of perfection, and used for the grandest, the most important purposes, long before we had the art of printing. In those times, to use the expression of one of the old Fathers of the Church, "Pictures were the books of the people;" in fact, they had no other; and even now, when books are plentiful and cheap, the use of pictures to convey instruction more rapidly and more accurately than by any words, is well known both to those who train the young and those who teach science.

But it is another thing when we have to consider pictures as ART, and painting as one of the divinest of the FINE ARTS properly so called.

Now a man may collect books merely as articles of curiosity and rarity, as specimens of printing and binding, like that collector whom Pope describes—

"In books, not authors, curious was my lord!"—

or he may like them as furniture to fill his shelves with gay binding and accredited names; and even so may a man collect pictures for their beauty, or their rarity, or their antiquity, or hang them upon his walls as mere ornamental furniture. No doubt such collections are a great, an allowable source of pleasure to the possessor and to the observer; but considered as productions of mind addressed to mind, this is not the highest advantage to be derived from pictures. As I have said, we should be able to read a picture as we read a book. A gallery of pictures may be compared with a well-furnished library; and I have sometimes thought that it would be a good thing if we could arrange a collection of pictures as we arrange a collection of books. In the ordering of a library with a view to convenience and use, we do not mix all subjects together. We have different compartments for theology, history, biography, poetry, travels, science, romances, and so forth; and we might consider pictures in a similar order. THEOLOGY in that case would comprise all sacred subjects, whether taken from the Holy Scriptures, or having any religious significance; they may be the *representation of an event*, such as the Elevation of the Serpent in the Wilderness,[1] the Raising of Lazarus,[2] the Worship of the Magi;[3] or they may be the *expression of an idea*, such as the Dead Saviour mourned by his mother and the angels,[4] or those most beautiful and inexhaustible subjects, the Human

[1] Rubens, Nat. Gal., 59.
[2] Sebastian del Piombo, Nat. Gal., 1.
[3] Paul Veronese, Nat. Gal., 268.
[4] Francia, Nat. Gal., 180.

Mother nursing her Divine Son,[1] and the Divine Son crowning in heaven the Mother who bore him on earth.[2] Such ideal subjects bear the same relation to sacred events as the Psalms and prophecies bear to the book of Kings.

In the category of theological pictures may be classed those which represent the effigies and sufferings of the holy Martyrs, who perished for their faith in the early ages of Christianity—as the noble Roman soldier St. Sebastian;[3] the Great Doctors and Teachers of the Church—as St. Jerome,[4] who made the first translation of the Scriptures into the vulgar tongue (thence called *the Vulgate*); and those personages who became ideal types of Christian virtues: thus we have the valorous angel Michael, the conqueror of the powers of evil;[5] the benign angel Raphael, the guardian of the young;[6] the learning and wisdom of St. Catherine,[7] the fortitude of St. Antony,[8] the chivalrous faith of St. George.[9] Some knowledge of these personages, their characters and actions, historical or legendary, and the manner in which they were represented by various artists for the edification of the people, will add greatly to the interest of a gallery of pictures; and we class such subjects as sacred art, just as we should class Milton's Paradise Lost and the Pilgrim's Progress as sacred poetry.

All would range as theology, and nothing is more

[1] Ghirlandajo, Nat. Gal., 296.
[2] Andrea Orcagna, Nat. Gal., 569.
[3] Pollaiuolo, Nat. Gal., 292. [4] Nat. Gal., 11, 227, 281.
[5] Perugino, Nat. Gal., 288. [6] Ibid.
[7] Raphael, Nat. Gal., 168. [8] An. Carracci, 198.
[9] Tintoretto, Nat. Gal., 16.

interesting than to observe the very different manner in which the self-same scene and subject has been conceived and represented by different artists.

But to continue our parallel between a library and a picture gallery. HISTORY would comprise all pictures representing such actions and events as have been recorded by uninspired writers — classical and modern. Such are "the Family of Darius at the feet of Alexander"[1] (from Grecian history), "the Romans carrying off the Sabine Women"[2] (from Roman history), "the Death of Lord Chatham"[3] (from English history), and so on; and portraiture stands in the same relation to historical painting that biography bears to history. Is not the picture of Ippolito de' Medici and Sebastian del Piombo a piece of biography?[4] and Julius the Second, that resolute old pope?[5] and Julia Gonzaga?[6] and Zurbaran's Monk?[7] and Rembrandt's Rabbi?[8] We are ignorant indeed, darkly ignorant, of history as of character, if we cannot *read* such pictures.

POETRY would comprise all subjects from the poets —ancient and modern. Such are the Bacchus and Ariadne,[9] the Venus and Adonis,[10] Mercury teaching Cupid to read,[11] the Judgment of Paris (all taken from the classics); Erminia and the Shepherds[12] (from Tasso); the Rescue of Serena[13] (from Spenser). These

[1] P. Veronese, Nat. Gal., 294. [2] Rubens, Nat. Gal., 38.
[3] Copley. [4] Nat. Gal., 20. [5] Ibid., 27.
[6] Ibid., 24. [7] Ibid., 230. [8] Ibid., 51.
[9] Titian, Nat. Gal., 35. [10] Titian, Nat. Gal., 34.
[11] Correggio, Nat. Gal., 10. [12] A. Carracci, Nat. Gal., 88.
[13] Hilton: this picture, and Copley's Death of Chatham, are now in the English school at the Kensington Museum.

are *poetry*, if they be not rather each in itself a poem. Then, correlative with fiction and the drama, domestic or romantic, we have that style of painting, called *Genre*, which deals with the scenes and incidents of familiar life, which may be of a very high moral significance, as the Marriage à-la-Mode ;[1] or of the lowest, as the Woman peeling Carrots,[2] or the "Drinking Boors ;[3] but whatever the significance, it may be ennobled by the perfect execution. Some modern novels, in which the most commonplace events of every-day life are treated with the most exquisite grace, delicacy, and knowledge of human nature, may be likened to those Dutch pictures in which two misers counting their gold, a lady reading a letter, or a woman bargaining for a fowl, shall be treated with such consummate elegance of execution, and even power of character, that they delight at once the eye and the fancy.

But *genre* painting was unknown in the early schools of Italian art ; the concerts and *conversazioni* of Giorgione and the other Venetians are too poetical to come under this designation, so I shall say no more of it here. And animal-painting, as a special class of art, such as Rubens, and Snyders, and Landseer have made it, was also unknown. At the same time we must acknowledge that, when the old Italians *did* introduce animals into their pictures, they showed themselves capable of excelling in imitative as well as ideal art. What can exceed the little birds on the steps of the throne in Benozzo Gozzoli's Madonna,[4] or the fish in

[1] Hogarth. [2] Maas, Nat. Gal. [3] Teniers, Nat. Gal.
[4] Nat. Gal., 283.

Perugino's picture of Raphael and Tobit,[1] for exquisite truth of nature? To be sure we cannot say the same of Paolo Uccello's horses.[2] Yet it is interesting to observe the first efforts in this way of a school which afterwards produced Andrea Verrocchio's equestrian statue of Colleone,[3] and Lionardo's "Battle of the Standard."[4]

Landscape-painting, which may be likened to books of travels and descriptions of scenery, was unknown as a separate class of art till the middle of the sixteenth century; but some of the early painters, particularly the Venetians, give us lovely bits of background to their religious scenes. That intense sympathy with natural scenery which we find in the works of Thomson and Wordsworth as poets, Cuyp and Hobbema as painters, seems to have been the growth of modern times.

Lastly, to continue our parallel, we have a scientific class of art as of books. Painting, when called in to illustrate the discoveries and triumphs of science, as geology, botany, architectural elevations, and the like, may be called scientific art; and a collection of this kind of pictures, where beauty of treatment is combined with exact truth, might be made very attractive as well as interesting and profitable. In these days scientific art is chiefly employed in illustrating books, and is the handmaid rather than the priestess and interpreter of nature. But photography is teaching us all

[1] Nat. Gal., 288.
[2] In the Battle of St. Egidio, Nat. Gal., 583
[3] At Venice. There is a fine cast in the Crystal Palace.
[4] See page 173.

the beauty and all the poetry that may be found in the most literal transcripts of truth; and, like landscape and portraiture, scientific art will find in time a place for itself in our galleries.

When we know and thoroughly understand the subject of a picture, we may then inquire the name of the painter, the age, the country, the school of art in which he was reared, to which he belonged; and hence we may derive the most various delight from the associations connected with this extended knowledge. These MEMOIRS of famous painters are intended to suggest such comparative and discriminating reflections, and I will conclude with a passage written long ago by an almost forgotten critic in art, old Jonathan Richardson:—

"When one sees an admirable piece of art, it is a part of the entertainment to know to whom to attribute it, and then to know his history; whence else is the custom of putting the author's picture or life at the beginning of a book? When one is considering a picture or a drawing, and at the same time thinks that this was done by *him* who had many extraordinary endowments of body and mind, but was withal very capricious;[1] who was honoured in life and death, expiring in the arms of one of the greatest princes of that age, Francis I., King of France, who loved him as a friend. Another is of *him*[2] who lived a long and happy life, beloved of Charles V., Emperor, and many others of the first princes of Europe. When one has another in his hand, and thinks this was done by *him*[3] who

[1] Leonardo da Vinci. See p. 174. [2] Titian [3] Michael Angelo.

so excelled in three arts as that any of them in that degree had rendered him worthy of immortality, and one that, moreover, durst contend with his sovereign (one of the haughtiest popes that ever was) upon a slight offered to him, and extricated himself with honour. Another is the work of *him*[1] who, without any one exterior advantage, by mere strength of genius, had the most sublime imaginations, and executed them accordingly, yet lived and died obscurely. Another we shall consider as the work of *him*[2] who restored painting when it was almost sunk; of him whose art made honourable, but, neglecting and despising greatness with a sort of cynical pride, was treated suitably to the figure he gave himself, not his intrinsic merit; which, not having philosophy enough to bear it, broke his heart. Another is done by *one*[3] who (on the contrary) was a fine gentleman, and lived in great magnificence, and was much honoured by his own and foreign princes; who was a courtier, a statesman, and a painter, and so much all these, that, when he acted in either character, that seemed his business, and the others his diversion.—I say, that when one thus reflects, besides the pleasure arising from the beauties and excellencies of the work, the fine ideas it gives us of natural things, the noble way of thinking one finds in it, and the pleasing thoughts it may suggest to us, an additional pleasure results from these reflections.

"But, O the pleasure! when a connoisseur and lover of art has before him a picture or a drawing of which he can say, this is the hand, there are the thoughts, of

[1] Correggio. [2] Annibal Carracci. [3] Rubens.

him[1] who was one of the politest, best-natured gentlemen that ever was; and beloved and assisted by the greatest wits and the greatest men then in Rome; of *him* who lived in great fame, honour, and magnificence, and died extremely lamented, and missed a Cardinal's hat only by dying a few months too soon, but was particularly esteemed and favoured by two popes, the only ones who filled the chair of St. Peter in his time, and as great men as ever sat there since that apostle,—if at least he ever did;[2] one, in short, who could have been a Leonardo, a Michael Angelo, a Titian, a Correggio, an Annibale, a Rubens, or any other he pleased, but none of them could ever have been a Raphael. And when we compare the hand and manner of one master with another, and those of the same man in different times, when we see the various turns of mind and various excellencies, and, above all, when we observe what is well or ill in their works, as it is a worthy, so it is also a very delightful exercise of our rational faculties."

It is to enlarge this sphere of rational pleasure in the contemplation of works of art that the following Memoirs were written.

---

[1] Raphael.

[2] Julius II. and Leo X are the popes alluded to, whose likeness to St. Peter may be doubted. Both were great patrons of art; but the first was violent, haughty, and ambitious; the latter selfish, sensual, vain, unprincipled. Raphael painted both; and each portrait is a faithful transcript of character, as well as a masterpiece of art.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

EARLY ITALIAN PAINTERS

GIOVANNI CIMABUE.

BORN AT FLORENCE 1240, DIED ABOUT 1302.

To Cimabue for three centuries had been awarded the lofty title of "Father of Modern Painting;" and to him, on the authority of Vasari, had been ascribed the merit, or rather the *miracle*, of having revived the art of painting when utterly lost, dead, and buried—of having by his single genius brought light out of darkness, form and beauty out of chaos. The error or gross exaggeration of Vasari in making these claims for his countryman has been pointed out by later authors: some have even denied to Cimabue any share whatever in the regeneration of art; and at all events it seems clear that his claims have been much over-stated; that, so far from painting being a lost art in the thirteenth century, and the race of artists annihilated, as Vasari would lead us to believe, several contemporary painters were living and working in the cities and churches of Italy previous to 1240; and it is possible to trace back an uninterrupted series of pictorial remains and names of painters

even to the fourth century. But in depriving Cimabue of his false glories, enough remains to interest and fix attention on the period at which he lived: his name has stood too long, too conspicuously, too justly, as a landmark in the history of art to be now thrust back under the waves of oblivion. A rapid glance over the progress of painting before his time will enable us to judge of his true claims, and place him in his true position relative to those who preceded and those who followed him.

The early Christians had confounded in their horror of heathen idolatry all imitative art and all artists; they regarded with decided hostility all images, and those who wrought them as bound to the service of Satan and heathenism; and we find all visible representations of sacred personages and actions confined to mystic emblems. Thus the Cross signified Redemption; the Fish, Baptism; the Ship represented the Church; the Serpent, Sin or the Spirit of Evil. When, in the fourth century, the struggle between paganism and Christianity ended in the triumph and recognition of the latter, and art revived, it was, if not in a new form, in a new spirit, by which the old forms were to be gradually moulded and modified. The Christians found the shell of ancient art remaining; the traditionary handicraft still existed; certain models of figure and drapery, &c., handed down from antiquity, though degenerated and distorted, remained in use, and were applied to illustrate, by direct or symbolical representations, the tenets of a purer faith. From the beginning, the figures selected to typify our redemption were those of the Saviour and the Blessed

Virgin, first separately, and then conjointly as the Mother and Infant. The earliest monuments of Christian art are to be found, nearly effaced, on the walls and ceilings of the catacombs at Rome, to which the persecuted martyrs of the faith had fled for refuge. The first recorded representation of the Saviour is in the character of the Good Shepherd, and the attributes of Orpheus and Apollo were borrowed to express the character of him who "redeemed souls from hell," and "gathered his people like sheep." In the cemetery of St. Calixtus at Rome a head of Christ was discovered, the most ancient of which any copy has come down to us: the figure is colossal; the face a long oval; the countenance mild, grave, melancholy; the long hair, parted on the brow, falling in two masses on either shoulder; the beard not thick, but short and divided. Here then, obviously imitated from some traditional description (probably the letter of Lentulus to the Roman Senate, supposed to be a fabrication of the third century), we have the type, the generic character since adhered to in the representations of the Redeemer.

A controversy arose afterwards in the early Christian Church which had a most important influence on art as subsequently developed. One party, with St. Cyril at their head, maintained that, the form of the Saviour having been described by the Prophet as without any outward comeliness, he ought to be represented in painting as utterly hideous and repulsive. Happily the most eloquent and influential among the fathers of the Church, St. Jerome, St. Augustin, St. Ambrose, and St. Bernard, took up the other side of the question; the

pope, Adrian I., threw his infallibility into the scale; and from the 8th century we find it decided, and afterwards confirmed by a papal bull, that the Redeemer should be represented with all the attributes of divine beauty which art in its then rude state could lend him.

Since that time the accepted and traditional type for the person of our Lord has been strictly attended to by the most conscientious artists and in the best schools of art—a tall, slender figure; a face of a long oval; a broad, serene, elevated brow; a countenance mild, melancholy, majestic; the hair ("of the colour of wine or wine lees"—which may mean either a dark rich brown or a golden yellow—both have been adopted) parted in the front, and flowing down on each side; the beard parted. The resemblance to His mother—His only earthly parent—was strongly insisted upon by the early ecclesiastical writers and attended to by the earliest painters, which has given something peculiarly refined and even feminine to the most ancient heads of our Saviour.

The most ancient representations of the Virgin Mary now remaining are the sculptures on the ancient Christian sarcophagi, about the 3rd and 4th centuries, and a mosaic in the chapel of San Venanzio at Rome, referred by antiquarians to the 7th century. Here she is represented as a colossal figure majestically draped, standing with the arms outspread (the ancient attitude of prayer), and her eyes raised to heaven; then, after the 7th century, succeeded her image in her maternal character, seated on a throne with the infant Saviour in her arms. We must bear in mind, once for

all, that from the earliest ages of Christianity the Virgin Mother of our Lord has been selected as the allegorical type of RELIGION in the abstract sense; and to this, her symbolical character, must be referred those representations of later times, in which she appears as trampling on the Dragon; as folding her votaries within the skirts of her ample robe; as interceding for sinners; as crowned between heaven and earth by the Father and the Son.

In the same manner traditional heads of St. Peter and St. Paul, rudely sketched, became in after-times the groundwork of the highest dignity and beauty, still retaining that peculiarity of form and character which time and long custom had consecrated in the eyes of the devout.

Besides the representations of Christ and the Virgin, some of the characters and incidents of the Old Testament were selected as pictures, generally with reference to corresponding characters and incidents in the Gospel; thus St. Augustin, in the latter half of the 4th century, tells us that "Abraham offering up his son Isaac" was then a common subject, typical, of course, of the Great Sacrifice of the Son of God; "Moses striking the rock," the Gospel or the Water of Life; the vine or grapes expressed the sacrament of the Eucharist; Jonah swallowed by the whale and then disgorged signified death and resurrection; Daniel in the lions' den signified redemption, &c. This system of corresponding subjects, of type and anti-type, was afterwards, as we shall see, carried much further.

In the 7th century, painting, as it existed in Europe,

may be divided into two great schools or styles—the Western, or Roman, of which the central point was Rome, and which was distinguished, amid great rudeness of execution, by a certain dignity of expression and solemnity of feeling; and the Eastern, or Byzantine school, of which Constantinople was the head-quarters, and which was distinguished by greater mechanical skill, by adherence to the old classical forms, by the use of gilding, and by the mean, vapid, spiritless conception of motive and character.

From the 5th to the 9th century the most important and interesting remains of pictorial art are the mosaics in the churches,* and the miniature paintings with which the MS. Bibles and Gospels were decorated.

But during the 10th and 11th centuries Italy fell into a state of complete barbarism and confusion, which almost extinguished the practice of art in any shape; of this period only a few works of extreme rudeness remain. In the Eastern empire painting still survived; it became, indeed, more and more conventional, insipid, and incorrect, but the technical methods were kept up; and thus it happened that when, in 1204, Constantinople was taken by the Crusaders, and the intercourse between the east and west of Europe was resumed, several Byzantine painters passed into Italy and Germany, where they were employed to decorate the

* Particularly those in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore at Rome, along the nave and over the principal arch, which date about the year 440 (those in the vault of the apsis are much later, about 1288); in the church of St. Cosmo and St. Damian at Rome, about the year 526; in the church of San Vitale at Ravenna, about the years 527-565; and in the church of St. Cecilia at Rome, about the year 817.

churches; and taught the practice of their art, their manner of pencilling, mixing and using colours, and gilding ornaments, to such as chose to learn of them. They brought over the Byzantine types of form and colour, the long lean limbs of the saints, the dark-visaged Madonnas, the blood-streaming crucifixes; and these patterns were followed more or less servilely by the native Italian painters who studied under them. Specimens of this early art remain, and in these later times have been diligently sought and collected into museums as curiosities, illustrating the history and progress of art: as such they are in the highest degree interesting; but it must be confessed that otherwise they are not attractive. There are some very valuable examples in the Wallerstein Gallery at Kensington Palace. We have also one, lately acquired, in our National Gallery, a little Greek picture of the famous Apothecary Saints, Cosmo and Damian, painted by a certain Emanuel. In the Berlin Gallery, in the Florence Gallery, and in the Louvre,* a few Greek pictures are preserved as curiosities. The subject is generally the Madonna and Child, throned; sometimes alone, sometimes with angels or saints ranged on each side. The characteristics are in all cases the same: the figures are stiff; the extremities long and meagre; the features hard and expressionless; the eyes long and narrow. The head of the Virgin is generally declined to the left: the infant Saviour is generally clothed, and sometimes crowned; two fingers of his right hand are ex-

* Nos. 503, 504, and 505. They are placed together near the entrance of the long gallery.

tended in act to bless; the left hand holding a globe, a scroll, or a book. With regard to the execution, the ornaments of the throne and borders of the draperies, and frequently the background, are elaborately gilded; the local colours are generally vivid; there is little or no relief; the handling is streaky; the flesh-tints are blackish or greenish. At this time, and for two hundred years afterwards (before the invention of oil painting), pictures were painted either in fresco, an art never wholly lost, or on panels of seasoned wood, and the colours mixed with water thickened with white of egg or the juice of the young shoots of the fig-tree. This last method was styled by the Italians *a colla* or *a tempera;* by the French, *en détrempe;* and in English, *in distemper:* and in this manner all movable pictures were executed previous to 1440.

As it is not the purpose of this little book to trace the gradual progress of early art, but rather to give some account of the early artists, and as we know nothing of those who lived in the first half of the 13th century except a name and a date inscribed on a picture, I shall not dwell upon them; only revert to the fact that before the birth of Cimabue (from 1200 to 1240) there existed schools of painting at Sienna and at Pisa, not only under Greek but under Italian teachers. The former city produced Guido da Sienna, whose Madonna and Child, with figures the size of life, signed and dated 1221, is preserved in the church of San Domenico at Sienna. It is engraved in Rosini's 'Storia della Pittura,' on the same page with a Madonna by Cimabue, to which it appears superior in drawing, attitude, ex

pression, and drapery. Pisa produced about the same time Giunta da Pisa, of whom there remain works with the date 1236: one of these is a Crucifixion, engraved in Ottley's 'Italian School of Design,' and on a smaller scale in Rosini's 'Storia della Pittura,' in which the expression of grief in the hovering angels, who are wringing their hands and weeping, is very earnest and striking. But undoubtedly the greatest man of that time, he who gave the grand impulse to modern art, was the sculptor Niccolo Pisano, whose works date from about 1220 to 1270. Further, it appears that even at Florence a native painter, a certain Maestro Bartolomeo, lived and was employed in 1236. Thus Cimabue can scarcely claim to be the "father of modern painting" even in his own city of Florence. We shall now proceed to the facts on which his traditional celebrity has been founded.

Giovanni of Florence, of the noble family of the Cimabui, called otherwise Gualtieri, was born in 1240. He was early sent by his parents to study grammar in the school of the convent of Santa Maria Novella, where (as is also related of other inborn painters), instead of conning his task, he distracted his teachers by drawing men, horses, buildings, on his school-books: before printing was invented, this spoiling of school-books must have been rather a costly fancy, and no doubt alarmed the professors of Greek and Latin. His parents, wisely yielding to the natural bent of his mind, allowed him to study painting under some Greek artists who had come to Florence to decorate the church of the convent in which he was a scholar. It seems doubtful

whether Cimabue *did* study under the identical painters alluded to by Vasari, but that his masters and models were the Byzantine painters of the time seems to admit of no doubt whatever. The earliest of his works mentioned by Vasari still exists—a St. Cecilia, painted for the altar of that saint, but now preserved in the Gallery of Florence.* He was soon afterwards employed by the monks of Vallombrosa, for whom he painted a Madonna with Angels on a gold ground, now preserved in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Florence. He also painted a Crucifixion for the church of the Santa Croce, still to be seen there, and several pictures for the churches of Pisa, to the great contentment of the Pisans; and by these and other works his fame being spread far and near, he was called in the year 1265, when he was only twenty-five, to finish the frescoes in the church of St. Francis at Assisi, which had been begun by Greek painters and continued by Giunta Pisano.

The decoration of this celebrated church is memorable in the history of painting. It is known that many of the best artists of the 13th and 14th centuries were employed there, but only fragments of the earliest pictures exist, and the authenticity of those ascribed to Cimabue has been disputed by a great authority.† Lanzi, however, and Dr. Kugler, agree in attributing to him

* It is a doubtful picture, but interesting from the subject. St. Cecilia, instead of playing on her organ or listening to the angels, is here a solemn-looking matron seated on a throne, and holding in one hand the palm as martyr, and in the other the Gospel for which she died. It is on the right hand as we enter the first long Corridor.

† Rumohr, 'Italienische Forschungen.'

the paintings on the roof of the nave, representing, in medallions, the figures of Christ, the Madonna, St. John the Baptist, St. Francis, and four magnificent angels winged and sceptred. "In the lower corners of the triangles are represented naked Genii bearing tasteful vases on their heads; out of these grow rich foliage and flowers, on which hang other Genii, who pluck the fruit or lurk in the cups of the flowers."* If these are really by the hand of Cimabue, we must allow that here is a great step in advance of the formal monotony of his Greek models. He executed many other pictures in this famous church, "*con diligenza infinita*," from the Old and New Testaments, in which, judging from the fragments which remain, he showed a decided improvement in drawing, in dignity of attitude, and in the expression of life, but still the figures have only just so much of animation and significance as are absolutely necessary to render the story or action intelligible. There is no variety, no express imitation of nature. Being recalled by his affairs to Florence, about 1270, he painted there the most celebrated of all his works, the Madonna and infant Christ, for the chapel of the Ruccellai in the church of Santa Maria Novella. This Madonna, of a larger size than any which had been previously executed, had excited in its progress great curiosity and interest among his fellow-citizens, for Cimabue refused to uncover it to public view: but it happened about that time that Charles of Anjou, brother of Louis IX., being on his way to take possession of the kingdom of Naples, passed through Florence, and was

* Kugler, 'Handbook.'

received and feasted by the nobles of that city; and among other entertainments, they conducted him to visit the house of Cimabue, which was in a garden near the Porta San Piero: on this festive occasion the Madonna was uncovered, and the people in joyous crowds hurried thither to look upon it, rending the air with exclamations of delight and astonishment, whence it is said this quarter of the city obtained and has kept ever since the name of the Borgo dei Allegri.* The Madonna, when finished, was carried in great pomp from the house of the painter to the church for which it was destined, accompanied by the magistrates of the city, by music, and by crowds of people in solemn and festive procession. This well-known anecdote has lent a venerable charm to the picture, which is yet to be seen in the church of Santa Maria Novella; but it is difficult in this advanced state of art to sympathise in the *naïve* enthusiasm it excited in the minds of a whole people six hundred years ago. Though not without a certain grandeur, the form is very stiff, with long lean fingers and formal drapery, little varying from the Byzantine models; but the infant Christ is better, the angels on either side have a certain elegance and dignity, and the colouring in its first freshness and delicacy had a charm hitherto unknown.† After this Cimabue became famous

* But according to others the street derived its name from the family of the Allegri.

† We have lately added to our National Gallery a picture by Cimabue, the originality of which has been disputed, but, as it appears to me, on no sufficient grounds. Its antecedents are well authenticated, and its resemblance to the undisputed pictures in the Belle Arti and the Ruccellai Chapel, at Florence, is quite satis-

in all Italy. He had a school of painting at Florence and many pupils, among them one who was destined to take the sceptre from his hand and fill all Italy with his fame—and who, but for him, would have kept sheep in the Tuscan valleys all his life—the glorious Giotto, of whom we are to speak presently. Cimabue, besides being a painter, was a worker in mosaic and an architect: he was employed, in conjunction with Arnolfo Lapi, in the building of the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, the cathedral of Florence. Finally, having lived for more than sixty years in great honour and renown, he died at Florence about the year 1302, while employed on the mosaics of the Duomo of Pisa, and was carried from his house in the Via del Cocomero to the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, where he was buried: the following epitaph was inscribed above his tomb:—

"CREDIDIT UT CIMABOS PICTURÆ CASTRA TENERE;
SIC TENUIT VIVENS—NUNC TENET ASTRA POLI." *

Besides the undoubted works of Cimabue preserved in the churches of San Domenico, la Trinità, and Santa Maria Novella at Florence, and in the Academy of Arts in the same city, there is in the Gallery of the Louvre a Madonna and Child enthroned, with six attendant

factory. If one of the hard, melancholy, lifeless Greek Madonnas could be placed beside it, the observer would better appreciate the advance made by Cimabue in gentleness and dignity. As an historical document the specimen is invaluable. It was formerly in the Santa Croce at Florence.

* Cimabue thought himself master of the field of painting;
While living he was so—now, he holds his place among the stars of heaven.

angels; the figures larger than life. (No. 174.) This is supposed to be the same which was originally painted for the convent of St. Francis at Pisa, and much resembles the Madonna in the Ruccellai Chapel. From these productions we may judge of the real merit of Cimabue. In his figures of the Virgin he has not much improved on the Byzantine models. The faces are not beautiful; the features are elongated; the extremities meagre; the general effect flat: but to his heads of prophets, patriarchs, and apostles, whether introduced into his great pictures of the Madonna or in other sacred subjects, he gave a certain grandeur of expression and largeness of form, or, as Lanzi expresses it, "*un non so che di forte e sublime*," in which he has not been greatly surpassed by succeeding painters; and this energy of expression—his chief and distinguishing excellence, and which gave him the superiority over Guido of Sienna and others who painted only Madonnas—was in harmony with his personal character. He is described to us as exceedingly haughty and disdainful, of a fiery temperament, proud of his high lineage, his skill in his art, and his various acquirements, for he was well studied in all the literature of his age. If a critic found fault with one of his works when in progress, or if he were himself dissatisfied with it, he would at once destroy it, whatever pains it might have cost him. From these traits of character, and the bent of his genius, which leaned to the grand and terrible rather than the gentle and graceful, he has been styled the Michael Angelo of his time. It is recorded of him by Vasari that he painted a head of St. Francis *after nature*, a

2.—Niccolo Pisano.

From the original by Simone Memmi, in the Chapel of the Spagnuoli, Florence.

thing, he says, till then unknown: it could not have been a portrait from life, because St. Francis died in 1225. The earliest head after nature which remains to us was painted by Giunta Pisano, about 1235, and was the portrait of Frate Elia, a monk of Assisi. Perhaps Vasari means that the San Francesco was the first representation of a sacred personage for which nature had been taken as a model.

The portrait of Cimabue prefixed to this essay is copied from a tracing of the original head, painted on the walls of the Chapel degli Spagnuoli, in the church of Santa Maria Novella, by Simone Memmi of Sienna, who was at Florence during the lifetime of Cimabue, and must have known him personally. This painting, though executed after the death of Cimabue, has always been considered authentic as a portrait; it is the same alluded to by Vasari, and copied for the first edition of his book.

Cimabue had several remarkable contemporaries. The greatest of these, and certainly the greatest artist of his time, was the sculptor NICCOLO PISANO. The works of this extraordinary genius which have been preserved to our time are so far beyond all contemporary art in knowledge of form, grace, expression, and intention, that, if indisputable proofs of their authenticity did not exist, it would be pronounced incredible. On a comparison of the works of Cimabue and Pisano, it is difficult to conceive that Pisano executed the bas-reliefs of the pulpit in the Cathedral of Pisa, and the Scriptural histories

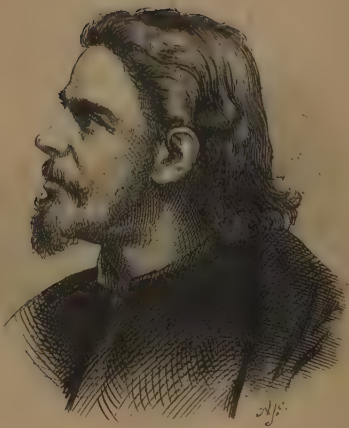
which adorn the façade of the Duomo at Orvieto, while Cimabue was painting the frescoes in the church of Assisi. He was the first to leave the stiff monotony of the traditional forms for the study of nature and the antique. The story says that his emulative fancy was early excited by the beautiful antique sarcophagus on which is seen sculptured the story of Phædra and Hippolytus. In this sarcophagus had been laid, a hundred years before, the body of Beatrice, the mother of the famous Countess Matilda: in the time of Niccolo it had been inserted into the exterior wall of the Duomo of Pisa; and as a youth he had looked upon it from day to day, until the grace, the life, and movement of the figures struck him, in comparison with the barbarous art of his contemporaries, as nothing less than divine.* Many before him had looked on this marble wonder, but to none had it spoken as it spoke to him. He was the first, says Lanzi, to see the light and to follow it.† There is an engraving after one of his bas-reliefs—a Deposition from the Cross—in Ottley's 'School of Design,' which should be referred to by the reader who may not have seen his works at Pisa, Florence, Sienna, and Orvieto. There are also several of his works engraved in Cicognara's 'Storia della Scultura.'

* This sarcophagus was restored in 1810 to the Campo Santo, where Beatrice had been interred in 1116.

† Rosini, in his 'Storia della Pittura,' has rectified some errors into which Vasari and Lanzi have fallen with regard to the dates of Niccolo Pisano's works—it appears that he lived and worked so late as 1290.

3.—Andrea Tafi.

Engraved in Vasari's History.



4.—Gaddo Gaddi.

Engraved in Vasari's History.

5.—Duccio di Boninsegna.

Engraved by L. Schorn.

Another contemporary of Cimabue, and his friend, was ANDREA TAFI, the greatest worker in mosaic of his time. The assertion of Vasari, that he learned his art from the Byzantines, is now discredited; for it appears certain that the mosaic-workers of Italy (the forerunners of painting) excelled the Greek artists then, and for a century or two before. Andrea Tafi died, very old, in 1294; and his principal works remain in the Duomo of St. Mark at Venice, and in the Baptistery of San Giovanni at Florence. Another famous mosaic-worker, also an intimate friend of Cimabue, was GADDO GADDI, remarkable for being the first of a family illustrious in several departments of art and literature. It must be remembered that the mosaic-workers of those times prepared and coloured their own designs, and may therefore take rank with the painters.

Further, there remain pictures by painters of the Sienna school which date before the death of Cimabue, and particularly a picture by a certain Maestro Mino, dated 1289, which is spoken of as wonderful for the invention and greatness of style.

Another Siennese painter was DUCCIO, who painted from 1282 (twenty years before the death of Cimabue) to about 1339, and "whose influence on the progress of art was unquestionably great." To this painter was allotted, in the year 1308, the task of painting the great altarpiece for the beautiful Cathedral of Sienna, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. The high altar then stood in the centre of the church, and the panel was painted on both sides, as it was to be seen both from before and behind the altar. On one side Duccio represented the

history of our Lord in twenty-seven small compartments, beginning with the Annunciation and ending with the Crucifixion, which forms the largest and principal subject. On the other side of the panel was represented the Madonna and Child enthroned, on each side six prophets and ten adoring angels, and lower down, on each side, five saints—in all forty-four figures. When finished this picture was carried in grand procession, attended by music and rejoicing crowds, to its place in the Cathedral. In the year 1506 it was removed. The panel was afterwards sawed through into two parts: one side (the Madonna) now hangs in the chapel of Sant' Ansano, to the left of the choir; the other (the life of Christ) on the right hand, opposite. They are accounted among the most precious monuments of early art. The predella, which was beneath the Madonna, contained, as usual, small subjects from the history of the Virgin Mary—these, five in number, are now in the sacristy of the Cathedral. Besides this great altarpiece, only one *undoubted* picture by Duccio is known to exist, and this is in the collection of his Royal Highness Prince Albert.*

All these artists (Niccolo Pisano excepted) still worked on in the trammels of Byzantine art. The first painter of his age who threw them wholly off, and left them far behind him, was Giotto.

* A series of outline engravings from Duccio's 'History of our Lord' was published at Rome by Dr. Emil Braun, the celebrated archæologist, and these justify the praise and admiration which is now accorded to the grace, the simplicity, and the spiritual significance of these beautiful compositions.

6.—Giotto (Giotto di Bondone).

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

Page 19.

GIOTTO.

BORN 1276, DIED 1336.

"Credette Cimabue nella Pittura
Tener lo campo, ed ora ha Giotto il grido;—
Sicchè la fama di colui oscura."

"—— Cimabue thought
To lord it over painting's field; and now
The cry is Giotto's, and his name eclips'd."

CAREY'S *Dante*.

THESE often-quoted lines, from Dante's 'Purgatorio, must needs be once more quoted here: for it is a curious circumstance that, applicable in his own day, five hundred years ago, they should still be so applicable in ours. Open any common history not intended for the very profound, and there we still find Cimabue "lording it over painting's field," and placed at the head of a revolution in art, with which, as an artist, he had little or nothing to do—but much as a man; for to him—to his quick perception and generous protection of talent in the lowly shepherd-boy—we owe GIOTTO, than whom no single human being of whom we read has exercised, in any particular department of science or art, a more immediate, wide, and lasting influence. The total change in the direction and character of art must in all human probability have taken place sooner

or later, since all the influences of that wonderful period of regeneration were tending towards it. Then did architecture struggle as it were from the Byzantine into the Gothic forms, like a mighty plant putting forth its rich foliage and shooting up towards heaven; then did the speech of the people—the *vulgar tongues*, as they were called—begin to assume their present structure, and become the medium through which beauty and love and action and feeling and thought were to be uttered and immortalized; and then arose GIOTTO, the destined instrument through which his own beautiful art was to become one of the great interpreters of the human soul, with all its "infinite" of feelings and faculties, and of human life in all its multifarious aspects. Giotto was the first painter who "held as it were the mirror up to nature." Cimabue's strongest claim to the gratitude of succeeding ages is, that he bequeathed such a man to his native country and to the world.

About the year 1289, when Cimabue was already old and at the height of his fame, as he was riding in the valley of Vespignano, about fourteen miles from Florence, his attention was attracted by a boy who was herding sheep, and who, while his flocks were feeding around, seemed intently drawing on a smooth fragment of slate, with a bit of pointed stone, the figure of one of his sheep as it was quietly grazing before him. Cimabue rode up to him, and, looking with astonishment at the performance of the untutored boy, asked him if he would go with him and learn; to which the boy replied, that he was right willing, if his father were content. The father, a herdsman of the valley, by name Bondone,

being consulted, gladly consented to the wish of the noble stranger, and Giotto henceforth became the inmate and pupil of Cimabue.

This pretty story, which was first related by Lorenzo Ghiberti, the sculptor (born 1378), and since by Vasari and a hundred others, luckily rests on evidence as satisfactory as can be given for any events of a rude and distant age, and may well obtain our belief, as well as gratify our fancy; it has been the subject of many pictures, and is introduced in Rogers's 'Italy:'—

> "—— Let us wander thro' the fields
> Where Cimabue found the shepherd-boy
> Tracing his idle fancies on the ground."

Giotto was about twelve or fourteen years old when taken into the house of Cimabue. For his instruction in those branches of polite learning necessary to an artist, his protector placed him under the tuition of Brunetto Latini, who was also the preceptor of Dante. When, at the age of twenty-six, Giotto lost his friend and master, he was already an accomplished man as well as a celebrated painter, and the influence of his large original mind upon the later works of Cimabue is distinctly to be traced.

The first recorded performance of Giotto was a painting on the wall of the Palazzo dell' Podestà, or council-chamber of Florence, in which were introduced the portraits of Dante, Brunetto Latini, Corso Donati, and others. Vasari speaks of these works as the first successful attempts at portraiture in the history of modern art. They were soon afterwards plastered or white-

washed over during the triumph of the enemies of Dante; and for ages, though known to exist, they were lost and buried from sight. The hope of recovering these most interesting portraits had long been entertained, and various attempts had been made at different times without success, till at length, as late as 1840, they were brought to light by the perseverance and enthusiasm of Mr. Bezzi and Mr. Kirkup, assisted by a subscription among the English and American residents and visitors then at Florence. On comparing the head of Dante, painted when he was about thirty, prosperous and distinguished in his native city, with the later portraits of him when an exile, worn, wasted, embittered by misfortune and disappointment and wounded pride, the difference of expression is as touching as the identity in feature is indubitable.

The attention which in his childhood Giotto seems to have given to all natural forms and appearances, showed itself in his earlier pictures; he was the first to whom it occurred to group his personages into something like a situation, and to give to their attitudes and features the expression adapted to it: thus, in a very early picture of the Annunciation he gave to the Virgin a look of fear; and in another, painted some time afterwards, of the Presentation in the Temple, he made the infant Christ shrink from the priest, and, turning, extend his little arms to his mother—the first attempt at that species of grace and naïveté of expression afterwards carried to perfection by Raphael. These and other works painted in his native city so astonished his fellow-citizens and all who beheld them, by their beauty and

novelty, that they seem to have wanted adequate words in which to express the excess of their delight and admiration, and insisted that the figures of Giotto so completely beguiled the sense that they were mistaken for realities; a commonplace eulogium, never merited but by the most commonplace and mechanical of painters.

In the church of Santa Croce, at Florence, Giotto painted a Coronation of the Virgin (still to be seen there in the Baroncelli Chapel), with choirs of angels and a multitude of saints on either side. In the refectory he painted the Last Supper, also still remaining; a grand, solemn, simple composition, which, as a first endeavour to give variety of expression and attitude to a number of persons—all seated, and all but two actuated by a similar feeling—must still be regarded as extraordinary.* In a chapel of the church of the Carmine at Florence he painted a series of pictures from the life of John the Baptist. These were destroyed by fire in 1771; but, happily, an English engraver, then studying at Florence, named Patch, had previously made accurate drawings from them, which he engraved and published. A fragment of the old fresco, containing the heads of two of the Apostles, who are bending in grief and devotion over the body of St. John, was in the collection of Mr. Rogers, the poet, and is now in the National Gallery (No. 276). It certainly justifies all that has been said

* The large refectory of Santa Croce is now a carpet manufactory, and Giotto's Cenacolo fills up one side. It is in a most ruined condition, and I find that it has lately been attributed to Taddeo Gaddi, one of the best pupils of Giotto.

of Giotto's power of expression, and, when compared with the remains of earlier art, more than excuses the wonder and enthusiasm of his contemporaries.

The pope, Boniface VIII., hearing of his marvellous skill, invited him to Rome; and the story says that the messenger of his Holiness, wishing to have some proof that Giotto was indeed the man he was in search of, desired to see a specimen of his excellence in his art: hereupon, Giotto, taking up a sheet of paper, traced on it with a single flourish of his hand a circle so perfect that "it was a miracle to see;" and (though we know not how or why) seems to have at once converted the pope to a belief of his superiority over all other painters.* This story gave rise to the well-known Italian proverb, "*Più tondo che l' O di Giotto*" (rounder than the O of Giotto), and is something like a story told of one of the Grecian painters. But to return. Giotto went to Rome, and there executed many things which raised his fame higher and higher; and among them, for the ancient Basilica of St. Peter's, the famous colossal mosaic of the *Navicella*, or the *Barca*, as it is sometimes called. It represents a ship, with the Disciples, on a tempestuous sea; the winds, personified as demons, rage around it. Above are the Fathers of the Old Testament; on the right stands Christ, raising Peter from the waves. The subject has an allegorical significance, denoting the troubles and triumphs of the Church. This mosaic has often changed its situation, and has been restored again and again, till nothing of Giotto's work remains but the

* "He was probably guided by the safer evidence of Giotto's fame," says a late critic.

original composition. It is now in the vestibule of St. Peter's at Rome.*

For the same Pope Boniface, Giotto painted the Institution of the Jubilee of 1300, which still exists in the portico of the Lateran at Rome.

In Padua Giotto painted the chapel of the Arena with frescoes from the history of Christ and the Virgin, in fifty square compartments. Of this chapel the late Lady Callcott published an interesting account, illustrated from drawings made by Sir Augustus Callcott. These however are superseded by the set of drawings engraved on wood and published by the Arundel Society, which, besides their beauty and conscientious accuracy, have the advantage of being described and commented on by Mr. Ruskin. At Padua Giotto met his friend Dante; and the influence of one great genius on another is strongly exemplified in some of his succeeding works, and particularly in his next grand performance, the frescoes in the church of Assisi. In the under church, and immediately over the tomb of St. Francis, the painter represented the three vows of the Order—Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience; and in the fourth compartment, the Saint enthroned and glorified amidst the host of Heaven. The invention of the allegories under which Giotto has represented the vows of the Saint,—his Marriage with Poverty—Chastity seated in her rocky fortress—and Obedience with the curb and yoke,—are ascribed by a tradition to Dante. Giotto also painted, in the Campo

* It is over the arch facing the principal door, so that you must turn your back to the door to see it.

Santo at Pisa, the whole history of Job, of which only some fragments remain.

By the time Giotto had attained his thirtieth year he had reached such hitherto unknown excellence in art, and his celebrity was so universal, that every city and every petty sovereign in Italy contended for the honour of his presence and his pencil, and tempted him with the promise of rich rewards. For the lords of Arezzo, of Rimini, and Ravenna, and for the Duke of Milan, he executed many works, now almost wholly perished. Castruccio Castricani, the warlike tyrant of Lucca, also employed him; but how Giotto was induced to listen to the offers of this enemy of his country is not explained. Perhaps Castruccio, as the head of the Ghibelline party, in which Giotto had apparently enrolled himself, appeared in the light of a friend rather than an enemy; however this may be, a picture which Giotto is said to have painted for Castruccio, and in which he introduced the portrait of the tyrant, with a falcon on his fist, was long preserved at Lucca.* For Guido da Polente, the father of that hapless Francesca di Rimini whose story is so beautifully told by Dante, he painted the interior of a church; and for Malatesta di Rimini (who was father of Francesca's husband) he painted the portrait of that prince in a bark, with his companions and a company of mariners; and among them, Vasari tells us, was the figure of a sailor, who, turning round

* It is no longer there. It *may* have been a copy of the portrait of Castruccio, painted by Andrea Orcagna, in the Campo Santo at Pisa.

with his hand before his face, is in the act of spitting in the sea, so life-like as to strike the beholders with amazement: this has perished; but the figure of the thirsty man stooping to drink, in one of the frescoes at Assisi, still remains, to show the kind of excellence through which Giotto excited such admiration in his contemporaries—a power of imitation, a truth in the expression of natural actions and feelings, to which painting had never yet ascended or descended. This leaning to the *actual* and the *real* has been made a subject of reproach, to which we shall hereafter refer.

It is said, but this does not rest on very satisfactory evidence, that Giotto also visited Avignon, in the train of Pope Clement V., and painted there the portraits of Petrarch and Laura.

About the year 1327, King Robert of Naples, the father of Queen Joanna, wrote to his son, the Duke of Calabria, then at Florence, to send to him, on any terms, the famous painter Giotto, who accordingly travelled to the court of Naples, stopping on his way in several cities, where he left specimens of his skill. He also visited Orvieto for the purpose of viewing the sculpture with which the brothers Agostino and Agnolo were decorating the cathedral, and bestowed on it high commendation. There is at Gaeta a Crucifixion painted by Giotto, either on his way to Naples or on his return, in which he introduced himself kneeling in an attitude of deep devotion and contrition at the foot of the cross: this introduction of portraiture into a subject so awful was another innovation, not so praiseworthy as some of his characteristics. Giotto's feeling for truth and propriety

of expression is particularly remarkable and commendable in the alteration of the dreadful but popular subject of the crucifix: in the Byzantine school the sole aim seems to have been to represent physical agony, and to render it, by every species of distortion and exaggeration, as terrible and repulsive as possible. Giotto was the first to soften this awful and painful figure by an expression of divine resignation and by greater attention to beauty of form. A Crucifixion painted by him became the model for his scholars, and was multiplied by imitation through all Italy; so that a famous painter of crucifixes after the Greek fashion, Margaritone, who had been a friend and contemporary of Cimabue, confounded by the introduction of this new method of art, which he partly disdained and partly despaired to imitate, and old enough to hate innovations of all kinds, took to his bed "*infastidito*" (through vexation), and so died.

But to return to Giotto, whom we left on the road to Naples. King Robert received him with great honour and rejoicing, and being a monarch of singular accomplishments, and fond of the society of learned and distinguished men, he soon found that Giotto was not merely a painter, but a man of the world, a man of various acquirements, whose general reputation for wit and vivacity was not unmerited. He would sometimes visit the painter at his work, and, while watching the rapid progress of his pencil, amused himself with the quaint good sense of his discourse. "If I were you, Giotto," said the king to him one very hot day, "I would leave off work and rest myself." "And so would I, sire," replied the painter, "if I were *you!*" The

king, in a playful mood, desired him to paint his kingdom, on which Giotto immediately sketched the figure of an ass with a heavy pack-saddle on his back, smelling with an eager air at another pack-saddle lying on the ground, on which were a crown and sceptre. By this emblem the satirical painter expressed the servility and the fickleness of the Neapolitans, and the king at once understood the allusion.

There exists at Naples, in the church of the Incoronata, a series of frescoes representing the Seven Sacraments according to the Roman ritual, which were formerly attributed to Giotto, but are now supposed to be by some follower of his style and time.* The Sacrament of Marriage contains many female figures, beautifully designed and grouped, with graceful heads and flowing draperies. This picture is traditionally said to represent the marriage of Joanna of Naples and Louis of Taranto; but Giotto died in 1336, and these famous espousals took place in 1347; a dry date will sometimes confound a very pretty theory. In the Sacrament of Ordination there is a group of chanting boys, in which the various expressions of the act of singing are given with truth of imitation, not unworthy of the master himself, which made Giotto the wonder of his day. His paintings from the Apocalypse in the church of Santa Chiara were whitewashed over, about two centuries ago, by a certain prior of the convent,

* There exist engravings from these frescoes, from which an idea may be formed of the grouping and composition. Three of these are given in Kugler's Handbook. But when I visited the old church of the Incoronata in 1858, I found them in a ruined condition.

because, in the opinion of this barbarian, *they made the church look dark!*

Giotto quitted Naples about the year 1328, and returned to his native city with great increase of riches and fame. He continued his works with unabated application, assisted by his pupils, for his school was now the most famous in Italy. Like most of the early Italian artists, he was an architect and sculptor, as well as a painter; and his last public work was the exquisitely beautiful Campanile or Bell-tower at Florence, founded in 1334, for which he made all the designs, and even executed with his own hand the models for the sculpture on the three lower divisions. According to Kugler, they form a regular series of subjects illustrating the development of human culture, through religion and laws, "conceived," says the same authority, "with profound wisdom." When the emperor Charles V. saw this elegant structure, he exclaimed that it ought to be "kept under glass." In the same allegorical taste Giotto painted many pictures of the Virtues and Vices, ingeniously invented and rendered with great attention to natural and appropriate expression. In these and similar representations we trace distinctly the influence of the genius of Dante.

A short time before his death Giotto was invited to Milan by Azzo Visconti. He executed some admirable frescoes in the ancient palace of the dukes of Milan; but these have perished. Finally, having retured to Florence, he soon afterwards died—"yielding up his soul to God in the year 1336; and having been," adds Vasari, "no less a good Christian than an excellent

painter:" he was honourably interred in the church of Santa Maria del Fiore, where his master Cimabue had been laid with similar honours thirty-five years before. Lorenzo de' Medici afterwards placed above his tomb his effigy in marble. Giotto left four sons and four daughters, but we do not hear that any of his descendants became distinguished in art or otherwise.*

Before we proceed to give some account of the personal character and influence of Giotto, both as a man and an artist, of which many amusing and interesting traits have been handed down to us, we must turn for a moment to reconsider that revolution in art which originated with him—which seized at once on all imaginations, all sympathies; which Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch have all commemorated in immortal verse or as immortal prose; which, during a whole century, filled Italy and Sicily with disciples formed in the same school and penetrated with the same ideas. All that had been done in painting before Giotto, resolved itself into the imitation of certain existing models, and their improvement to a certain point in style of execution: there was no new method; the Greekish types were everywhere seen, more or less modified—a Madonna in the middle, with a couple of lank saints or angels stuck on each side; or saints bearing symbols, or with their names written over their heads, and texts of Scripture proceeding from their mouths; or at the most a few figures, placed in such a position relatively to each

* In the foregoing sketch some disputed points in the life of Giotto are for obvious reasons left at rest, and the order of events has been somewhat changed, in accordance with more exact chroniclers than Vasari.

other as sufficed to make a story intelligible, the arrangement being generally traditional and arbitrary; such seems to have been the limit to which painting had advanced previous to 1280.

Giotto appeared; and almost from the beginning of his career he not only deviated from the practice of the older painters, but stood opposed to them. He not only improved—he changed; he placed himself on wholly new ground. He took up those principles which Niccolo Pisano had applied to sculpture, and went to the same sources, to nature, and to those remains of pure antique art which showed him how to look at nature. His residence at Rome while yet young, and in all the first glowing development of his creative powers, must have had an incalculable influence on his after-works. Deficient to the end of his life in the knowledge of form, he was deficient in that kind of beauty which depends on form; but his feeling for grace and harmony in the airs of his heads and the arrangement of his groups was exquisite; and the longer he practised his art, the more free and flowing became his lines. But, beyond grace and beyond beauty, he aimed at the expression of natural character and emotion, in order to render intelligible his newly invented scenes of action and his religious allegories. A writer near his time speaks of it as something new and wonderful, that in Giotto's pictures "the personages who are in grief look melancholy, and those who are joyous look gay." For his heads he introduced a new type, exactly reversing the Greek pattern: long-shaped, half-shut eyes; a long, straight nose; and a very short chin. The hands are rather delicately, but

never correctly, drawn, and he could not design the feet well, for which reason we generally find those of his men clothed in shoes or sandals wherever it is possible, and those of his women covered with flowing drapery. The management of his draperies is, indeed, particularly characteristic; distinguished by a certain lengthiness and narrowness in the folds, in which, however, there is much taste and simplicity, though, in point of style, as far from the antique as from the complicated meanness of the Byzantine models; and it is curious that this peculiar treatment of the drapery, these long perpendicular folds, correspond in character with the principles of Gothic architecture, and with it rose and declined. For the stiff, wooden limbs, and motionless figures, of the Byzantine school, he substituted life, movement, and the *look*, at least, of flexibility. His notions of grouping and arrangement he seems to have taken from the ancient basso-relievos; there is a statuesque grace and simplicity in his compositions which reminds us of them. His style of colouring and execution was, like all the rest, an innovation on received methods: his colours were lighter and more roseate than had ever been known; the fluid by which they were tempered more thin and easily managed; and his frescoes must have been skilfully executed to have stood so well as they have done. Their duration is indeed nothing compared to the Egyptian remains; but the latter have been for ages covered up from light and air in a dry sandy climate: those of Giotto have been exposed to all the vicissitudes of weather and of underground damp, have been whitewashed and every way

ill-treated, yet the fragments which remain have still a surprising freshness, and his distemper pictures are still wonderful. We have in the National Gallery a single example of Giotto, the small fragment of a fresco already described (p. 23), and an altarpiece, certainly from his school and contemporary (painted about 1330), which will give an idea of his characteristic merits. The only picture in the Louvre attributed to him (a St. Francis, as large as life) is dubious and unworthy of him. In the Florentine gallery are three pictures: Christ on the Mount of Olives, one of his best works; and two Madonnas, with graceful angels. In the gallery of the Academy of Arts, in the same city, are more than twenty small pictures, about a foot in height, which formerly decorated the presses or wardrobes in the sacristy of Santa Croce, and representing subjects from the life and acts of Christ and St. Francis.* Those who are curious may consult the engravings after Giotto in the plates to the 'Storia della Pittura' of Rosini; those in D'Agincourt's 'Histoire de l'Art par les Monumens;' in Ottley's 'Early Italian School,' a copy of which is in the British Museum; and the set of engravings published by the Arundel Society.

Giotto's personal character and disposition had no small part in the revolution he effected. In the union of endowments which seldom meet together in the same

* There were originally twenty-six of these small but beautiful compositions; thirteen from the history of our Saviour, and thirteen from the history of St. Francis. The church of Santa Croce belongs to the Franciscan order. See Kugler's Handbook, p. 130, and the 'Legends of the Monastic Orders,' for an explanation of this double series.

individual—extraordinary inventive and poetical genius, with sound, practical, energetic sense, and untiring activity and energy—Giotto resembled Rubens; and only this rare combination could have enabled him to fling off so completely all the fetters of the old style, and to have executed the amazing number of works which are with reason attributed to him. His character was as independent in other matters as in his own art. He seems to have had little reverence for received opinions about anything, and was singularly free from the superstitious enthusiasm of the times in which he lived, although he lent his powers to embodying that very superstition. Perhaps the very circumstance of his being employed in painting the interiors of churches and monasteries opened to his acute, discerning, and independent mind reflections which took away some of the respect for the mysteries they concealed. There is extant a poem of Giotto's, entitled 'A Song against Poverty,' which becomes still more *piquante* in itself, and expressive of the peculiar turn of Giotto's mind, when we remember that he had painted the Glorification of Poverty as the Bride of St. Francis, and that in those days songs in *praise* of poverty were as fashionable as devotion to St. Francis, the "Patriarch of poverty." Giotto was celebrated too for his joyous temper, for his witty and satirical repartees, and seems to have been as careful of his worldly goods as he was diligent in acquiring them. Boccaccio relates an anecdote of him, not very important; but as it contains several traits which are divertingly characteristic, I will give it here:—

"Fair and dear ladies!" (Thus the novelist is wont to address his auditory.) "It is a wondrous thing to see how oftentimes nature hath been pleased to hide within the most misshapen forms the most wondrous treasures of soul, which is evident in the persons of two of our fellow-citizens, of whom I shall now briefly discourse to you. Messer Forese da Rabatta, the advocate, being a personage of the most extraordinary wisdom, and learned in the law above all others, yet was in body mean and deformed, with, thereunto, a flat, currish (*ricagnato*) physiognomy; and Messer Giotto, who was not in face or person one whit better favoured than the said Messer Forese, had a genius of that excellence, that there was nothing which nature (who is the mother of all things) could bring forth, but he with his ready pencil would so wondrously imitate it, that it seemed not only *similar*, but *the same*; thus deluding the visual sense of men, so that they deemed that what was only pictured before them did in reality exist. And seeing that through Giotto that art was restored to light which had been for many centuries buried (through fault of those who, in painting, addressed themselves to please the eye of the vulgar, and not to content the understanding of the wise), I esteem him worthy to be placed among those who have made famous and glorious this our city of Florence. Nevertheless, though so great a man in his art, he was but little in person, and, as I have said, ill-favoured enough. Now it happened that Messer Forese and Giotto had possessions in land in Mugello, which is on the road leading from Florence to Bologna, and thither they rode one day on their respective affairs, Messer

Forese being mounted on a sorry hired jade, and the other in no better case. It was summer, and the rain came on suddenly and furiously, and they hastened to take shelter in the house of a peasant thereabouts who was known to them; but the storm still prevailing, they, considering that they must of necessity return to Florence the same day, borrowed from the peasant two old, worn-out pilgrim-cloaks and two rusty old hats, and so they set forth. They had not proceeded very far when they found themselves wet through with the rain, and all bespattered with the mud; but after a while, the weather clearing in some small degree, they took heart, and from being silent they began to discourse of various matters. Messer Forese, having listened a while to Giotto, who was, in truth, a man most eloquent and lively in speech, could not help casting on him a glance as he rode alongside, and considering him from head to foot thus wet, ragged, and splashed all over, and thus mounted and accoutred, and not taking his own appearance into account, he laughed aloud. 'O Giotto,' said he, jeeringly, 'if a stranger were now to meet us, could he, looking on you, believe it possible that you were the greatest painter in the whole world?' 'Certainly,' quoth Giotto, with a side glance at his companion, 'certainly; if looking upon your worship he could believe it possible that you knew your A B C!' Whereupon Messer Forese could not but confess that he had been paid in his own coin."

This is one of many humorous repartees which tradition has preserved, and an instance of that readiness of wit—that *prontezza*—for which Giotto was admired; in fact he seems to have presented in himself, in the

union of depth and liveliness, of poetical fancy and worldly sense, of independent spirit and polished suavity, an epitome of the national character of the Florentines, such as Sismondi has drawn it. We learn, from the hyperboles used by Boccaccio, the sort of rapturous surprise which Giotto's imitation of life caused in his imaginative contemporaries, and which assuredly they would be far from exciting now; and the unceremonious description of his person becomes more amusing when we recollect that Boccaccio must have lived in personal intercourse with the painter, as did Petrarch and Dante. When Giotto died, in 1336, his friend Dante had been dead three years; Petrarch was thirty-two, and Boccaccio twenty-three years of age. When Petrarch died, in 1374, he left to his friend Francesco da Carrara, Lord of Padua, a Madonna, painted by Giotto, as a most precious legacy, "a wonderful piece of work, of which the ignorant might overlook the beauties, but which the learned must regard with amazement." All writers who treat of the ancient glories of Florence—Florence the beautiful —Florence the free—from Villani down to Sismondi, count Giotto in the roll of her greatest men. Antiquaries and connoisseurs in art seach out and study the relics which remain to us, and recognise in them the dawn of that splendour which reached its zenith in the beginning of the sixteenth century. No visitor to Florence ever looks up to the Campanile without a feeling of wonder and delight, without thinking what that man must have been who conceived and executed a work so nobly, so supremely elegant; while to the philosophic observer Giotto appears as one of those few heaven-

endowed beings, whose development springs from a source within—one of those unconscious instruments in the hand of Providence, who, in seeking their own profit and delight through the expansion of their own faculties, make unawares a step forward in human culture, lend a new impulse to human aspirations, and, like the "bright morning star, day's harbinger," may be merged in the succeeding radiance, but never forgotten.

Before we pass on to the scholars and imitators of Giotto, who during the next century filled all Italy with schools of art, we may here make mention of one or two of his contemporaries, not so much for any performances left behind them, but because they have been commemorated by men more celebrated than themselves, and survive embalmed in their works as "flies in amber." Dante has mentioned, in his 'Purgatorio,' two painters of the time, famous for their miniature illustrations of Missals and MSS. Before the invention of printing, and indeed for some time after, this was an important branch of art: it flourished from the days of Charlemagne to those of Charles V., and was a source of honour as well as riches to the laymen who practised it. Many, however, of the most beautiful specimens of illuminated manuscripts are the work of the nameless Benedictine monks, who laboured in the silence and seclusion of their convents, and who yielded to their community most of the honour and all the profit: this was not the case with Oderigi, whom Dante has represented as expiating in purgatory his excessive vanity as a painter, and humbly giving the palm to another, Franco Bolognese,

of whom there remains no relic but a Madonna, engraved in Rosini's 'Storia della Pittura.' He retains, however, a name as the founder of the early Bolognese school. The fame of Buffalmacco as a jovial companion, and the tales told in Boccaccio of his many inventions and the tricks he played on his brother-painter the simple Calandrino, have survived almost every relic of his pencil. Yet he appears to have been a good painter of that time, and to have imitated, in his later works, the graceful simplicity of Giotto:* he had also much honour and sufficient employment, but, having been more intent on spending than earning, he died miserably poor in 1340.

Pietro Cavallini studied under Giotto at Rome, but seems never to have wholly laid aside the Greekish style in which he had been first educated. He was a man of extreme simplicity and sanctity of mind and manners, and felt some scruples in condemning as an artist the ill-painted Madonnas before which he had knelt in prayer: this feeling of earnest piety he communicated to all his works. There is by him a picture of the Annunciation preserved in the church of St. Mark at Florence, in which the expression of piety and modesty in the Virgin, and of reverence in the kneeling angel, is perfectly beautiful: the same devout feeling enabled him to rise to the sublime in a grand picture of the Crucifixion which he painted in the church of Assisi, and which is reckoned one of the most important monuments of the Giotto school.

* A picture of St. Ursula, an early work of this painter, in the Academy at Pisa, is quite Byzantine in style. The frescoes in the Campo Santo at Pisa, so long attributed to him, are by another hand.

7.—Pietro Cavallini.

Engraved by Schorn.

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The resignation of the divine sufferer, the lamenting angels, the fainting Virgin, the groups of Roman soldiers, are all painted with a truth and feeling quite wonderful for the time. Engravings after Cavallini may be found in Ottley's 'Early Italian School,' and in Rosini (p. 21). He became the pupil of Giotto when nearly forty years old, and survived him only a short time, dying in 1340 With Cavallini begins the list of painters of the Roman school, afterwards so illustrious. Among the contemporaries of Giotto we must refer once more to Duccio of Sienna, whose great altarpiece has been already described. It is remarkable, and should be kept in remembrance, that, of all the schools of painting then rising in Italy, all more or less modified by the Giottesque style, the painters of Sienna alone retained a particular stamp of nationality, which in the course of two centuries they never wholly lost. While the school of Florence developed into increasing vigour, elegance, and dignity, that of Sienna leaned towards pathos and sentiment—qualities remarkable in Duccio and his successors, and which characterised the Sienna pictures even when that peculiar pathetic grace was afterwards modified by the grand drawing of the Florentine school. Duccio was an established painter when Giotto was a child, and his influence in his native city remained long after death. Perhaps the perpetual enmity and jealousy between these two famous cities, and frequent sanguinary conflicts, conspired to keep the two nationalities at variance even in art.

The scholars and imitators of Giotto, who adopted the new method *(il nuovo metodo)*, as it was then called, and

who collectively are distinguished as the *Scuola Giottesca*, may be divided into two classes:—1. Those who were merely his assistants and imitators, who confined themselves to the reproduction of the models left by their master. 2. Those who, gifted with original genius, followed his example rather than his instructions, pursued the path he had opened to them, introduced better methods of study, more correct design, and carried on in various departments the advance of art into the succeeding century.

Of the first it is not necessary to speak. Among the men of great and original genius who immediately succeeded Giotto, THREE must be especially mentioned for the importance of the works they have left, and for the influence they exercised on those who came after them. These were Andrea Orcagna, Simone Memmi, and Taddeo Gaddi.

The first of these, Andrea Cioni, commonly called ANDREA ORCAGNA, did not study under Giotto, but owed much indirectly to that vivifying influence which he breathed through art. Andrea was the son of a goldsmith at Florence. The goldsmiths of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were in general excellent designers and not unfrequently became painters, as in the instances of Francia, Verrochio, Andrea del Sarto, &c. Andrea Orcagna apparently learned design under the tuition of his father. Rosini places his birth previous to the year 1310: in the year 1332 he had already acquired so much celebrity that he was called upon to continue the decoration of the Campo Santo at Pisa.

This seems the proper place to give a more detailed

8.—Andrea Orcagna.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

account of one of the most extraordinary and interesting monuments of the middle ages. The Campo Santo of Pisa, like the Cathedral at Assisi, was an arena in which the best artists of the time were summoned to try their powers; but the influence of the frescoes in the Campo Santo on the progress and development of art was yet more direct and important than that of the paintings in the church of Assisi.

The Campo Santo,* once a cemetery, though no longer used as such, is an open space of about four hundred feet in length and one hundred and eighteen feet in breadth, enclosed with high walls, and an arcade, something like the cloisters of a monastery or cathedral, running all round it. On the east side is a large chapel, and on the north two smaller chapels, where prayers and masses are celebrated for the repose of the dead. The open space was filled with earth brought from the Holy Land by the merchant-ships of Pisa, which traded to the Levant in the days of its commercial splendour. This open space, once sown with graves, is now covered with green turf. At the four corners are four tall cypress-trees, their dark, monumental, spiral forms contrasting with a little lowly cross in the centre, round which ivy or some other creeping plant has wound a luxuriant bower. The beautiful Gothic arcade was designed and built about 1283 by Giovanni Pisano, the son of the great Niccolo Pisano already mentioned. This arcade, on the side next the burial-ground, is pierced by sixty-two windows of ele-

* The Campo Santo or "Holy Field" is the generic name of a cemetery in Italy.

gant tracery divided from each other by slender pilasters; upwards of six hundred sepulchral monuments of the nobles and citizens of Pisa are ranged along the marble pavements, and mingled with them are some antique remains of great beauty, which the Pisans in former times brought from the Greek Isles. Here also is seen the famous sarcophagus which first inspired the genius of Niccolo Pisano, and in which had been deposited the body of Beatrice, mother of the famous Countess Matilda. The walls opposite to the windows were painted in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with Scriptural subjects. Most of these are half ruined by time, neglect, and damp; some only present fragments; here an arm—there a head; and the best preserved are faded, discoloured, ghastly in appearance, and solemn in subject. The whole aspect of this singular place, particularly to those who wander through its long arcades at the close of day, when the figures on the pictured walls look dim and spectral through the gloom, and the cypresses assume a blacker hue, and all the associations connected with its sacred purpose and its history rise upon the fancy, has in its silence and solitude, and religious destination, some thing inexpressibly strange, dreamy, solemn, almost awful. Seen in the broad glare of noonday, the place and the pictures lose something of their power over the fancy, and that which last night haunted us as a vision, to day we examine, study, criticise.

The building of the Campo Santo was scarcely finished when the best painters of the time were summoned to paint the walls all round the interior with

appropriate subjects. This was a work of many years: it was indeed continued at intervals through two centuries; and thus we have a series of illustrations of the progress of art during its first development, of the religious influences of the age, and even of the dress and manners of the people, which are faithfully exhibited in some of these most extraordinary compositions. To comprehend them aright we must first consider the purpose of the locality—a place sacred to the dead. It was to remind those who came to meditate within its precincts of the providence of God towards men, as exemplified in Scriptural history; of the great sacrifice which brought redemption; of the troubles of human life; of inevitable death; of resurrection; of the last judgment; and of the final destinies which await the souls of the just and the unjust. This was the general design.

On the left, as we enter, we find the troubles of life represented in the history of Job, the great biblical type of suffering, faith, and patience. This compartment was painted by Giotto, but few fragments remain. On the north wall opposite we find the history of God's dealings with man: first, the Creation of the universe and of mankind; then the whole series of events from the Fall and the Expulsion from Paradise, down to David and Solomon, including the history of the patriarchs Abel, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph; the story of the Israelites and Moses and Aaron; ending with the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. These were painted by Benozzo Gozzoli. Then on the east wall was the history of our Lord, now almost wholly effaced. On

chres in the left corner of the picture; in them lie the bodies of three princes, in different stages of decay. Close by, in extreme old age and supported on crutches, stands the old hermit St. Macarius, who, turning to the princes, points down to this bitter "Memento mori." They look on apparently with indifference, and one of them holds his nose, as if incommoded by the horrible stench. One queenly lady alone, deeply moved, rests her head on her hand, her countenance full of a pensive sorrow. On the mountain heights are several hermits, who, in contrast to the followers of the joys of the world, have attained in a life of contemplation and abstinence to a state of tranquil blessedness. One of them milks a doe, squirrels are sporting round him; another sits and reads; and a third looks down into the valley, where the remains of the mighty are mouldering away. There is a tradition that among the personages in these pictures are many portraits of the artist's contemporaries.

The second representation is the Last Judgment. Above, in the centre, Christ and the Virgin are throned in separate glories. He turns to the left, towards the condemned, while he uncovers the wound in his side, and raises his right arm with a menacing gesture, his countenance full of majestic wrath. The Virgin, on the right of her Son, is the picture of heavenly mercy: she turns, with an appealing look, to our Lord; with one hand pressed to the bosom which nourished Him, she pleads for sinners. On either side are ranged the prophets of the Old Testament, the apostles, and other saints—severe, solemn, dignified figures. Angels,

holding the instruments of the Passion, hover over Christ and the Virgin: under them is a group of archangels. First, the archangel Michael, as the "Angel of Judgment," stands in the midst, holding a scroll in each hand; immediately before him another archangel, supposed to represent Raphael, the guardian angel of humanity, cowers down, shuddering, while two others sound the awful trumpets of doom. Lower down is the earth, where men are seen rising from their graves; armed angels direct them to the right and left. Here is seen King Solomon, who, whilst he rises, seems doubtful to which side he should turn; here a hypocritical monk, whom an angel draws back by the hair from the host of the blessed; and there a youth in a gay and rich costume, whom another angel leads away to Paradise. There is wonderful and even terrible power of expression in some of the heads, and it is said that among them are many portraits of contemporaries, but unfortunately no circumstantial traditions as to particular figures have reached us. The attiudes of Christ and the Virgin were afterwards borrowed by Michael Angelo, in his celebrated Last Judgment; but, notwithstanding the perfection of his forms, he stands far below the dignified grandeur of the old master. Later painters have also borrowed from his arrangement of the patriarchs and apostles—particularly Fra Bartolomeo and Raphael.

The third representation, directly succeeding the foregoing, is Hell. It is said to have been executed from a design of Andrea, by his brother Bernardo: it is altogether inferior to the preceding representations in

execution, and even in the composition. Here the imagination of the painter, unrestrained by any just rules of taste, degenerates into the monstrous and disgusting, and even the grotesque and ludicrous. Hell is here represented as a great rocky caldron, divided into four compartments rising one above the other. In the midst sits Satan, a fearful armed giant—himself a fiery furnace, out of whose body flames arise in different places, in which sinners are consumed or crushed. In other parts the condemned are seen spitted like fowls, and roasted and basted by demons, with other such atrocious fancies, too horrible and sickening for description. The lower part of the picture was badly painted over, and altered according to the taste of the day, in the sixteenth century; certainly not for the better.

Andrea Orcagna was also a sculptor. He executed, in 1359, the exquisitely beautiful and elaborate tabernacle or shrine which the Florentines dedicated in the church called Or San Michele, and which is still to be seen there; and, not less consummate as an architect than as a sculptor and painter, he designed and built the graceful and beautiful portico in the *Piazza del Gran Duca* at Florence, called the *Loggia dei Lanzi*, and which, according to his design, was to have been continued all round the Piazza; but the municipality could not afford the expense, the funds having been expended in the war with the Pisans; and before the work could be completed—and it still remains incomplete—Andrea died, about 1376.*

* We have now in the National Gallery an undoubted picture by Andrea—a large altarpiece in three large and nine small divisions

9. Simone di Martino, called Simone Memmi.

Engraved in Vasari's History.

Simone Martini, usually called SIMONE MEMMI, was a painter of Sienna, of whom very few works remain, but the friendship of Petrarch has rendered his name illustrious. Simone Memmi was employed at Avignon when it was the seat of the popes (about 1340), and there he painted the portrait of Laura and presented it to Petrarch, who rewarded him with two Sonnets and immortality. Simone also painted a famous picture on the wall of the Spanish chapel in the church of Santa Maria Novella at Florence, which may still be seen there: it represents the Church militant and triumphant—with a great number of figures, among which are the portraits of Cimabue, Petrarch, and Laura. He also painted in the Campo Santo, and his pictures there are among the finest in expression and in grouping. They represented, on the south wall over the door, the "Assumption of the Virgin Mary"—that is, her ascension into heaven—a subject often chosen in those times to express the hope in a future life; and the history of St. Raniori, a native of Pisa, who, for his pious life and wonderful miracles, was held in great respect by his countrymen the Pisans.

Simone Memmi also painted, in conjunction with AMBROGIO LORENZETTI, another Siennese painter, some very extraordinary frescoes in the *Palazzo Publico*, or Town-hall, of Sienna. I have also seen at Naples, in the church of San Lorenzo, a very interesting picture, representing St. Louis of Anjou, Bishop of Toulouse,

—which if studied carefully, with the explanations in the Catalogue, will give a very good idea of the manner in which these great religious compositions were put together.

crowning his brother, Robert of Anjou, as King of Naples, while he is himself crowned by two angels. There is a beautiful little miniature, undoubtedly by him, in the Liverpool Museum, but we have no specimen in our National Gallery. Simone was certainly one of the most remarkable and interesting painters of his time, and quite independent of the influence of Giotto. He died about 1345.

Pietro Lorenzetti painted in the Campo Santo the Hermits in the Wilderness: they are represented as dwelling in caves and chapels, upon rocks and mountains; some studying, others meditating, others tempted by demons in various horrible or alluring forms, for such were the diseased fancies which haunted a solitary and unnatural existence. As the laws of perspective were then unknown, the various groups of hermits and their dwellings are represented one above another, and all of the same size, much like the figures on a china plate. It is, however, very interesting, and Lorenzetti repeated these scenes on a smaller scale in a picture now in the Gallery at Florence.

Antonio Veneziano also painted in the Campo Santo, about 1387; and showed himself superior to all who had preceded him in feeling and grace, though inferior to Andrea Orcagna in sublimity. Spinello of Arezzo was next employed, about 1390. He painted the story of St. Ephesus. Spinello seems to have been a man of genius, but of most unregulated mind. Vasari tells a story of him which shows at once the vehemence of his fancy and his morbid brain. He painted a picture of the Fallen Angels, in which he had laboured to

10.—Pietro Laurati di Lorenzetti.

Engraved in Vasari, Ed. 1568.

11.—Antonio Veneziano.

Engraved in Vasari's History.

12.—Taddeo Gaddi.

Engraved in Vasari's History.

render the figure of Satan as terrible, as deformed, as revolting as possible. The image, as he worked upon it, became fixed in his fancy, and haunted him in sleep. He dreamed that the Prince of Hell appeared before him under the horrible form in which he had arrayed him, and demanded why he should be thus treated, and by what authority the painter had represented him so abominably hideous. Spinello awoke in terror; soon afterwards he became distracted, and so died, about the year 1400.

But leaving the Campo Santo, we must return to the pupils of Giotto. The third alluded to was TADDEO GADDI, the favourite scholar of Giotto, and his godson. His pictures are considered the most important works of the 14th century: they resemble the manner of Giotto in the feeling for truth, nature, and simplicity; but we find in them improved execution, with even more beauty and largeness and grandeur of style. His pictures are numerous: several are in the Academy at Florence and the Museum at Berlin; and in our National Gallery are two large panels, which probably formed the two wings of a central piece (an "Enthroned Madonna," or a "Coronation of the Virgin"), filled with figures of saints who appear as if in attendance on some grand ceremony or some superior personage, all the heads being finely discriminated in character. Also (lately acquired) an altarpiece dedicated to John the Baptist, representing the Baptism of our Saviour, and subjects from the history of St. John below, which are worthy of study as examples of the style of Taddeo. There are four small

pictures by him in the Louvre, and four more important in the Berlin Gallery. Between Taddeo Gaddi and Simone Memmi there existed an ardent friendship and a mutual admiration which did honour to both. He was, like many of the old painters, a skilful architect, and built the Ponte Vecchio at Florence, which is still standing, and still famous for the goldsmiths' shops which line it on each side. After Giotto's there was no name more celebrated in his time than that of Taddeo Gaddi. He died in 1366, leaving two sons, Agnolo and Giovanni, who were both painters. Another of Giotto's most famous followers was Tommaso di Stefano, called Giottino, or "the little Giotto," from the success with which he emulated his master. He was of a thoughtful, rather melancholy temperament, and seems to have thrown all the tenderness of his nature into a small picture of the dead Saviour lamented by his Mother, the other Maries, and Nicodemus, which exists in the Florence Gallery.

I have mentioned here but a few of the most prominent names among the multitude of painters who flourished from 1300 to 1400 : before we enter on a new century we will take a general view of the progress of the art itself, and the purposes to which it was applied

The progress made in painting was chiefly by carrying out the principles of Giotto in expression and in imitation. Taddeo Gaddi and Simone excelled in the first; the imitation of form and of natural objects was so improved by Stefano Fiorentino, that he was styled by his contemporaries *Il Scimia della Natura*, "the Ape of Nature." Giottino, the son of this Stefano, and

others, improved in colour, in softness of execution, and in the means and mechanism of the art; but oil-painting was not yet invented, and linear perspective was unknown. Engraving on copper, cutting in wood, and printing were the inventions of the next century. Portraits were seldom painted, and then only of very distinguished persons, introduced into large compositions. The imitation of natural scenery, that is, *landscape painting*, as a branch of art, now such a familiar source of pleasure, was as yet unthought of. When landscape was introduced into pictures as a background or accessory, it was merely to indicate the scene of the story: a rock represented a desert; some formal trees, very like brooms set on end, indicated a wood; a bluish space, sometimes with fishes in it, *signified*, rather than represented, a river or a sea; yet in the midst of this ignorance, this imperfect execution, and limited range of power, how exquisitely beautiful are some of the remains of this early time! affording in their simple, genuine grace, and lofty, earnest, and devout feeling, examples of excellence which our modern painters are beginning to feel and to understand, and which the great Raphael himself did not disdain to study, and even to copy.

As yet the purposes to which painting was applied were almost wholly of a religious character. No sooner was a church erected than the walls were covered with representations of sacred subjects, either from Scriptural history or the legends of saints. Devout individuals or families built and consecrated chapels; and then, at great cost, employed painters either to decorate the

walls or to paint pictures for the altars; the Madonna and Child, or the Crucifixion, were the favourite subjects; the donor of the picture or founder of the chapel being often represented on his knees in a corner of the picture, and sometimes (as more expressive of humility) of most diminutive size, out of all proportion to the other figures. Where the object was to commemorate the dead, or to express at once the grief and the devotion of the survivors, the subject was generally a "Deposition from the Cross"—that is, our Saviour taken down from the cross, and lying in the arms of his afflicted mother. The doors of the sacristies, and of the presses in which the priests' vestments were kept, were often covered with small pictures of Scriptural subjects; as were also the chests in which were deposited the utensils for the Holy Sacrament. Almost all the small moveable pictures of the 14th and 15th centuries which have come down to us are either the borders or small compartments cut out from the broken-up altarpieces of chapels and oratories, or they are from the panels of doors, from the covers of chests, or other pieces of ecclesiastical furniture. In those days the idea of having pictures of any kind, far less pictures representing the most awful scenes and mysteries of our religion, hung as mere ornaments upon the walls of a room, had never occurred to any one.

13.—Lorenzo Ghiberti.

From Vasari's History.

LORENZO GHIBERTI.

BORN 1378, DIED 1455.

THE DOORS OF SAN GIOVANNI.

WE are now to enter on a view of the progress of painting in the fifteenth century—a period perhaps the most remarkable in the whole history of mankind—distinguished by the most extraordinary mental activity, by rapid improvement in the arts of life, by the first steady advance in philosophical inquiry, by the restoration of classical learning, and by two great events, of which the results lie almost beyond the reach of calculation—the invention of the art of printing, and the discovery of America.

The progressive impulse which characterised this memorable period was felt not less in the fine arts: in painting, the adoption of oils in the mixing of colours, instead of the aqueous and glutinous vehicles formerly used for the purpose, led to some most important results. But long before the general adoption of this and other improvements in the *materials* employed, there had been a strong impulse given to the mental development of art, of which we have to say a few words before we come to treat further of the history and efforts of individual minds.

During the fourteenth century the leading school of art was that of Florence, and we find all Italy filled with the scholars and imitators of Giotto; but in the fifteenth century there was a manifest striving after originality of style,—a branching off into particular schools, distinguished by the predominance of some particular characteristic in the mode of treatment,—as expression, form, colour, the tendency to the merely imitative, or the aspiration towards the spiritual and ideal. At this time we begin to hear of the Neapolitan, Umbrian, Bolognese, Venetian, and Paduan schools as distinctly characterised; but from 1400 to 1450 we still find the painters of Florence, Sienna, and Arezzo in advance of all the rest in power, invention, fertility, and in the application of knowledge and mechanical means to a given end: and as in the thirteenth century we traced the new influence given to modern art by Giotto back to the sculptor Niccolo Pisano, so in the fifteenth century we find the influence of another sculptor, Lorenzo Ghiberti, producing an effect on his contemporaries, mere especially his fellow-citizens, which, by developing and perfecting the principles of imitation on which Giotto had worked, stamped that peculiar character on Florentine art which distinguished it all through the century of which we have now to speak, and the beginning of the next.

For these reasons, the story of Ghiberti, and the casting of the famous doors of San Giovanni, may be considered as an epoch in the history of painting: we shall find, as we proceed, almost every great name, and every important advance in art, connected with it

directly or indirectly, while the system of *competition* which has been adopted with regard to the designs for our Houses of Parliament and other public monuments lends a particular interest and application to this beautiful anecdote.

Florence, at the period of which we speak, was at the head of all the states of Italy, and at the height of its prosperity. The government was essentially democratic in spirit and form; every class and interest in the state, the aristocracy, the military, merchants, tradesmen, and mechanics, had each a due share of power, and served to balance each other. The family of the Medici, who a century later seized on the sovereignty, were at this time only among the most distinguished citizens, and members of a great mercantile house, at the head of which was Giovanni, the father of Cosmo de' Medici. The trades were divided into guilds or companies, called ARTI, which were represented in the government by twenty-four CONSOLI, or consuls. It was the consuls of the guild of merchants who, in the year 1401, undertook to erect a second gate or door of bronze to the Baptistery of St. John, which should form a pendant to the first, executed in the preceding century (1330), by Andrea Pisano, from the designs of Giotto, and representing in rich sculpture the various events of the life of St. John the Baptist.* To equal or surpass this

* A Baptistery, as its name imports, is an edifice used for the purposes of baptism, and always dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The Baptistery of San Giovanni at Florence is a large chapel of an octangular form, surmounted by a dome: on three of the sides are entrances. It is an appendage of the cathedral, though separate from it.

beautiful door, which had been for half a century the admiration of all Italy, was the object proposed, and no expense was to be spared in its attainment.

The *Signoria*, or members of the chief government, acting in conjunction with the *Consoli*, made known this munificent resolve through all Italy, and in consequence not only the best artists of Florence, but many from other cities, particularly Sienna and Bologna, assembled on this occasion, From among a great number, seven were selected by the *Consoli* as worthy to compete for the work, upon terms not merely just, but munificent. Each competitor received, besides his expenses, a fair indemnity for his labour for one year. The subject proposed was the Sacrifice of Isaac, and at the end of the year each artist was required to give in a design, executed in bronze, of the same size as one of the compartments of the old door, that is, about two feet square.

There were thirty-four judges, principally artists, some natives of Florence, others strangers; each was obliged to give his vote in public, and to state at the same time the reasons by which his vote was justified. The names of the seven competitors, as given by Vasari, were—Jacopo della Quercia, of Sienna; Nicolo d' Arezzo, his pupil; Simon da Colle, celebrated already for his fine workmanship in bronze, from which he was surnamed Simon *dei Bronzi;* Francesco di Valdambrina; Filippo Brunelleschi; Donato, better known as Donatello; and LORENZO GHIBERTI.

Lorenzo was at this time about twenty-three; he was the son of a Florentine named Cione, and of a family which had attained to some distinction in Florence.

The mother of Lorenzo, left a widow at an early age, married a worthy man named Bartoluccio, known for his skill as a goldsmith. The goldsmiths of those days were not merely *artisans*, but artists in the high sense of the word; they generally wrought their own designs, consisting of figures and subjects from sacred or classical story, exquisitely chased in relief, or engraved or enamelled on the shrines or chalices used in the Church service; or vases, dishes, sword-hilts, and other implements.

The arts of drawing and modelling, then essential to a goldsmith, as well as practical skill in chiselling, and founding and casting metals, were taught to the young Lorenzo by his father-in-law; and his progress was so rapid, that at the age of nineteen or twenty he had already secured to himself the patronage of the Prince Pandolfo Malatesta, Lord of Pesaro, and was employed in the decoration of his palace when Bartoluccio sent him notice of the terms of the competition for the execution of the doors of San Giovanni. Lorenzo immediately hastened to present himself as one of the competitors, and, on giving evidence of his acquired skill, he was accepted among the elected seven. They had each their workshop and furnace apart, and it is related that most of them jealously kept their designs secret from the rest: but Lorenzo, who had all the modest self-assurance of conscious genius, did not; on the contrary, he listened gratefully to any suggestion or criticism which was offered, admitting his friends and distinguished strangers to his *atelier* while his work was going forward. To this candour he added a persevering

courage; for when, after incredible labour, he had completed his models, and made his preparations for casting, some flaw or accident in the process obliged him to begin all over again, he supplied this loss of time by the most unremitting labour, and at the end of the year he was not found behind his competitors. When the seven pieces were exhibited together in public, it was adjudged that the work of Quercia was wanting in delicacy and finish; that of Valdambrina confused in composition; that of Simon da Colle well cast, but ill drawn; that of Niccolo d'Arezzo heavy and ill-proportioned in the figures, though well composed; in short, but three among the number united the various merits of composition, design, and delicacy of workmanship, and were at once preferred before the rest. These three were the work of Brunelleschi, then in his twenty-fifth year; Donatello, then about eighteen; and Lorenzo Ghiberti, not quite twenty-three. The suffrages seemed divided; but after a short pause, and the exchange of a few whispered words, Brunelleschi and Donatello withdrew, generously agreeing and proclaiming aloud that Lorenzo had excelled them all, that to him alone belonged the prize; and this judgment, as honourable to themselves as to their rival, was confirmed amid the acclamations of the assembly.*

* The three are preserved in the *Camera de' Bronzi*, in the Florence Gallery; and in the set of engravings from the three doors, published by Lasinio, the designs by Ghiberti and Brunelleschi are placed side by side, and may be compared. The superiority of the former, in point of elegance, is at once apparent. See 'Le tre Porte del Battisterio di San Giovanni di Firenze, incise ed illustrate.' 1821. There is a copy in the British Museum.

The citizens of Florence were probably not less desirous than we should be in our day to behold the completion of a work begun with so much solemnity. But the great artist who had undertaken it was not hurried into carelessness by their impatience or his own; nor did he contract to finish it, like a blacksmith's job, in a given time. He set about it with all due gravity and consideration, yet, as he describes his own feelings in his own words, *con grandissima diligenza e grandissimo amore*, "with infinite diligence and infinite love." He began his designs and models in 1402, and in twenty-two years from that time, that is, in 1424, the door was finished and erected in its place. As in the first door Andrea Pisano had chosen for his theme the life of John the Baptist, the precursor of the Saviour, and the patron saint of the Baptistery, Lorenzo continued the history of the Redemption in a series of subjects from the Annunciation to the descent of the Holy Ghost; these he represented in twenty panels or compartments, ten on each of the folding-doors, and below these eight others containing the full-length effigies of the four evangelists and the four doctors of the Latin Church—grand, majestic figures;—and all around a border of rich ornaments, fruit, and foliage, and heads of the prophets and the sibyls intermingled, wondrous for the beauty of the design and excellence of the workmanship; the whole was cast in bronze, and weighed thirty-four thousand pounds of metal.

Such was the glory which this great work conferred not only on Lorenzo himself, but the whole city of Florence, that he was regarded as a public benefactor,

and shortly afterwards the same company confided to him the execution of the third gate of the same edifice The gate of Andrea Pisano, formerly the principal entrance, was removed to the side, and Lorenzo was desired to construct a central door which was to surpass the two lateral ones in beauty and richness. He chose this time the history of the Old Testament, the subjects being selected by Leonardo Bruni d'Arezzo, chancellor of the republic, and represented by Ghiberti in ten compartments, each two and a half feet square, beginning with the Creation, and ending with the Meeting of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba; and he enclosed the whole in an elaborate border or frame composed of intermingled fruits and foliage, and full-length figures of the heroes and prophets and prophetesses of the Old Testament, standing in niches, to the number of twenty-four, each about fourteen inches high, wonderful for their various and appropriate character, for correct, animated design, and delicacy of workmanship. This door, of the same material and weight as the former, was assigned to him in 1424, and the ten compartments finished in 1447; but the ornaments and small figures around were not completed till 1450; the whole was gilt and set up in its place by Lorenzo and his son Vittorio in 1452.

It is especially worthy of remark that the only fault of these otherwise *faultless* works was precisely that character of style which rendered them so influential as a school of imitation and emulation for painters. The subjects are in sculpture, in relief, and cast in the hardest, severest, darkest, and most inflexible of all manageable materials—in bronze. Yet they are treated throughout

much more in accordance with the principles of painting than with those of sculpture. We have here groups of numerous figures, near or receding from the eye in just gradations of size and relief, according to the rules of perspective; different actions of the same story represented on different planes; buildings of elaborate architecture; landscape, trees, and animals: in short, a dramatic and scenic style of conception and effect wholly opposed to the severe simplicity of classical sculpture. Ghiberti's genius, notwithstanding the inflexible material in which he embodied his conceptions, was in its natural bent pictorial rather than sculptural; and each panel of his beautiful gates is, in fact, a picture in relief, and must be considered and judged as such. Regarding them in this point of view, and not subjecting them to those rules of criticism which apply to sculpture, we shall be able to appreciate the astonishing fertility of invention exhibited in the various designs —the felicity and clearness with which every story is told, the grace and naïveté of some of the figures,* the simple grandeur of others, the luxuriant fancy displayed in the ornaments, and the perfection with which the whole is executed; and to echo the energetic praise of Michael Angelo, who pronounced these gates "*worthy to be the Gates of Paradise!*"

Complete sets of casts from these celebrated compositions are now to be found in most of the collections and academies on the Continent. King Louis Philippe presented a set to our Government School of Design. In

* The angels in the woodcut are a perfect example of this grace and simplicity.

the Crystal Palace a set of the casts, with all the ornaments, has been most artistically put together and coloured in imitation of bronze, so as to give a very perfect idea of the *present* state of these gates; it must not be forgotten, however, that they were originally gilt.

Lorenzo Ghiberti died in the year 1455, at the age of seventy-seven. His former competitors, Brunelleschi and Donatello, remained his friends through life, and have left behind them names not less celebrated, the one as an architect, the other as a sculptor.

This is the history of those famous gates

> "So marvellously wrought,
> That they might serve to be the gates of Heaven!"

14.—Fra Filippo Lippi.

From Vasari's History, Ed. 1568.

FILIPPO LIPPI,

BORN 1400, DIED 1469;

AND

ANGELICO DA FIESOLE,

BORN 1387, DIED 1455.

CONTEMPORARY with Lorenzo Ghiberti lived two painters, both gifted with surpassing genius, both of a religious order, being professed monks; in all other respects the very antipodes of each other; and we find the very opposite impulses given by these remarkable men prevailing through the rest of the century at Florence and elsewhere. From this period we date the great schism in modern art, though the seeds of this diversity of feeling and purpose were sown in the preceding century. We now find, on the one side, a race of painters who cultivated with astonishing success all the mental and mechanical aids that could be brought to bear on their profession; profoundly versed in the knowledge of the human form, and intent on studying and imitating the various effects of nature in colour and in light and shade, without any other aspiration than the representation of beauty for its own sake, and the pleasure and the triumph of difficulties overcome. On the other hand, we find a race

of painters to whom the cultivation of art was a sacred vocation—the representation of beauty a means, not an end; by whom Nature in her various aspects was studied and deeply studied, but only for the purpose of embodying whatever we can conceive or reverence as highest, holiest, purest in heaven and earth, in such forms as should best connect them with our intelligence and with our sympathies.

The two classes of painters who devoted their genius to these very diverse aims have long been distinguished in German and Italian criticism as the *Naturalists* and the *Idealists* or *Mystics*, and these denominations are now becoming familiarized in our own language. During the fifteenth century we find in the various schools of art scattered through Italy these different aims more or less apparent, sometimes approximating, sometimes diverging into extremes, but the distinction always apparent; and the influence exercised by those who pursued their art with such very different objects—with such very different feelings—was of course different in its result. Painting, however, during this century was still almost wholly devoted to ecclesiastical purposes; it deviated into the classical and secular in only two places, Florence and Padua.

In the convent of the Carmelites, where Masaccio painted his famous frescoes, was a young monk, one whom poverty had driven, as a child, to take refuge there, and who had afterwards taken the habit from necessity rather than from inclination. His name was Filippo Lippi (which may be translated Philip the son of Philip), but he is known in the history of art as Fra

Filippo (Friar Philip). In him, as in many others, the bent of the genius was early decided, for nature had made him a painter.* He was son of a butcher, born 1412, and was left an orphan 2 years later. The patient investigations of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle and others prove, from authentic records, that the greater part of Vasari's Life of him is without foundation, a mere romance, though it is not possible to disprove altogether the charge of immorality brought against him. From 1420 to 1432 he remained an inmate of the Carmine monastery, and perhaps studied in the Brancacci chapel. In 1432 he left the monastery. It is probable that the connection of the friar with the family of Cosmo de' Medici began at a much earlier date than Vasari believed.

"The story of Lippi's capture by the pirates of Barbary seems to be a romance, and there is no trace either of his stay in Ancona, the place where he is supposed to have been captured, or of his residence in Naples, where he is said to have landed after his captivity. Nor is it true that his withdrawal from the convent in which he had been brought up involved his abandonment of the frock, or at least of some species of religious vow. We may note, on the contrary, that in all the pictures which bear his signature he calls himself 'Frater Filippus.' In a letter written by Lippi to Piero de' Medici, dated August 13, 1439, the

* On a comparison of dates it appears that Fra Filippo did not owe his first inspiration to Masaccio, for he was at least thirty years of age when the frescoes in the chapel of the Carmine were undertaken.

Fra clearly describes his condition when he says, 'I am one of the poorest friars of Florence.' This note indeed is one of the most direct contradictions to the general tenor of Vasari's narrative respecting Fra Filippo that can be conceived. It paints the man, and gives such an insight into his struggles as to create a lively sympathy in his favour."*

Under the patronage of the Medici family he painted at Florence a great number of admirable pictures, and was called upon to decorate many convents and churches in the neighbourhood. He is known to have been very poor, and constantly in want of money; but the following story of his extreme profligacy rests solely on the authority of Vasari, and its truth may be fairly doubted. It is alleged that, being called upon to paint a Madonna for the convent of St. Margaret at Prato, he persuaded the sisterhood to allow a beautiful novice, whose name was Lucretia Buti, to sit to him for a model. In the end he seduced this girl, and carried her off from the convent, to the great scandal of the community and the inexpressible grief and horror of her father and family. The best answer to this charge of profligacy perhaps is the fact that Filippo was then an old man nearly 60; that he had been elected in 1452 chaplain to a nunnery in Florence, and in 1457 was rector of St. Quirico at Legnaia.

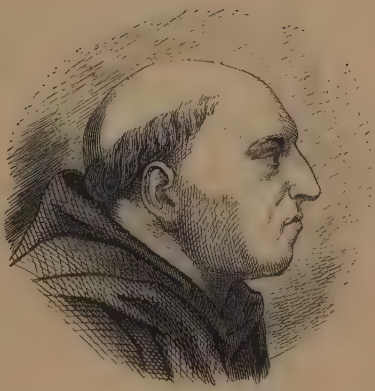
Filippo Lippi was undoubtedly a man of extraordinary genius: he adopted and carried on all the improvements of Masaccio, and was the first who invented that particular style of grandeur and breadth

* Crowe and Cavalcaselle's New History of Italian Painters, vol. ii. p. 323.

in the drawing of his figures, the grouping, and the contrast of light and shade, afterwards carried to such perfection by Andrea del Sarto. He was one of the earliest painters who introduced landscape backgrounds, painted with some feeling for the truth of nature; but the expression he gave to his personages, though always energetic, was often inappropriate, and never calm or elevated: in the representation of sacred incidents he was sometimes fantastic and sometimes vulgar; and he was the first who desecrated such subjects by introducing the portraits of women who happened to be the objects of his preference at the moment. There are many pictures by Fra Filippo in the churches at Florence, particularly in the Augustine church of the Santo Spirito; two in the gallery of the Academy there; five in the Berlin Museum. In the Louvre there is one undoubtedly genuine, and of great beauty, marked by all his characteristics; it represents the Madonna standing, and holding the infant Saviour in her arms; on each side are angels; and two bishops of the Augustine Order, St. Frediano and St. Gregory, kneel in front. The attitude of the Virgin is grand, the head commonplace; the countenance of the infant Christ heavy; the angels, with crisped hair, have the faces of street urchins; but the adoring monks are wonderful for the fine expression in their upturned faces, and the whole picture is most admirably executed. It was painted for the church of the Santo Spirito at Florence, and is a celebrated production. In our National Gallery we have now a remarkable and authentic picture, "the Vision of St. Bernard;" also two lunettes from

the Riccardi (Medici) palace,—the Annunciation, and St. John the Baptist with six other saints. This extraordinary man died at Spalato, it is said of poison, about 1469. He left a son, probably an adopted son, Filippo Lippi, called Filippino (to distinguish him from his father), who became in after years an excellent painter.

Contemporary with Fra Filippo, or rather earlier in point of date, lived the other painter-monk, presenting in his life and character the strongest possible contrast to the former. He was, as Vasari tells us, one who might have lived a very agreeable life in the world, had he not, impelled by a sincere and fervent spirit of devotion, retired from it at the age of twenty to bury himself within the walls of a cloister: a man with whom the practice of a beautiful art was thenceforth a hymn of praise, and every creation of his pencil an act of piety and charity, and who, in seeking only the glory of God, earned an immortal glory among men. This was Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole, whose name, before he entered the convent, was Guido or Guidolino. He has since obtained, from the holiness of his life, the title of *Il Beato*, "the Blessed," by which he is often mentioned in Italian histories of art. He was born in 1387, near Fiesole, and in 1407, being then twenty, and already skilled in the art of painting, particularly miniature illuminations of Missals and choral books, he, with one of his brothers named Benedetto, also a painter, entered the Dominican convent of St. Mark at Florence, and took the habit of the Order. It is not known exactly under whom he studied, but he is said to have been taught by Starnina, the best colourist of that time. The



15.—Fra Giovanni da Fiesole, called Il Beato Angelico.

From a fresco by Fra Bartolommeo at Florence.
Engraved by G. B. Nocchi.

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rest of his long life of seventy years presents only one unbroken tranquil stream of placid contentment and pious labours. Except on one occasion, when called to Rome by Pope Nicholas V. to paint in the Vatican, he never left his convent, and then only yielded to the express command of the pontiff. While he was at Rome the Archbishopric of Florence became vacant, and the pope, struck by the virtue and learning of Angelico, and the simplicity and sanctity of his life, offered to install him in that dignity, one of the greatest in the power of the papal see to bestow. Angelico refused it from excess of modesty, pointing out at the same time to the notice of the pope one of the monks of his convent as much more worthy of the honour, and by his active talents more fitted for the office. The pope listened to his recommendation; Frate Antonio was raised to the see, and became celebrated as the best Archbishop of Florence that had been known for two centuries. Meanwhile Angelico pursued his vocation in the still precincts of his quiet monastery, and, being as assiduous as he was devout, he painted a great number of pictures, some in distemper and on a small scale, to which he gave all the delicacy and finish of miniature; and in his own convent of San Marco many large frescoes, with numerous figures nearly life size, as full of grandeur as of beauty. He painted only sacred subjects, and never for money. Those who wished for any work of his hand were obliged to apply to the prior of the convent, from whom Angelico received with humility the order or the permission to execute it, and thus the brotherhood was at once enriched by his talent and edified by

his virtue. To Angelico the act of painting a picture devoted to religious purposes was an act of religion, for which he prepared himself by fasting and prayer, imploring on bended knees the benediction of Heaven on his work; he then, under the impression that he had obtained the blessing he sought, and glowing with what might truly be called inspiration, took up his pencil; and mingling with his earnest and pious humility a singular species of self-uplifted enthusiasm, he could never be persuaded to alter his first draught or composition, believing that which he had done was according to the will of God, and could not be changed for the better by any afterthought of his own or suggestion from others. All the works left by Angelico are in harmony with this gentle, devout, enthusiastic spirit. They are not remarkable for the usual merits of the Florentine school: they are not addressed to the taste of connoisseurs, but to the faith of worshippers. Correct drawing of the human figure could not be expected from one who regarded the exhibition of the undraped form as a sin; in the learned distribution of light and shade, in the careful imitation of nature in the details, and in variety of expression, many of his contemporaries excelled him; but none approached him in that poetical and religious fervour which he threw into his heads of saints and Madonnas. Power is not the characteristic of Angelico; wherever he has had to express energy of action, or bad or angry passions, he has generally failed. In his pictures of the Crucifixion and the Stoning of St. Stephen, the executioners and the rabble are feeble and often ill drawn, and his fallen angels and devils

are anything but devilish; while, on the other hand, the pathos of suffering, of pity, of divine resignation —the expression of extatic faith and hope, or serene contemplation, have never been placed before us as in his pictures. In the heads of his young angels, in the purity and beatitude of his female saints, he has never been excelled—not even by Raphael.

The principal works of Angelico are the frescoes in the church of his own convent of St. Mark at Florence; an exquisite reliquary or tabernacle, painted in miniature, in the sacristy of Santa Maria Novella; another large tabernacle of an enthroned Madonna in the Florence Gallery, in which the angels are surprising for their celestial grace; at Rome, the stories of St. Lawrence and St. Stephen in the chapel of Nicholas V. In the Louvre is an altarpiece by him of surpassing beauty. The subject is the Coronation of the Virgin Mary by her son the Redeemer, in the presence of saints and angels. It represents a throne under a rich Gothic canopy, to which there is an ascent by nine steps; on the highest kneels the Virgin, veiled, her hands crossed on her bosom. She is clothed in a red tunic, a blue robe over it, and a royal mantle with a rich border flowing down behind. The features are most delicately lovely, and the expression of the face full of humility and adoration. Christ, seated on the throne, bends forward, and is in the act of placing the crown on her head; on each side are twelve angels, who are playing a heavenly concert with guitars, tambourines, trumpets, viols, and other musical instruments; lower than these, on each side, are forty holy

personages of the Old and New Testament; and at the foot of the throne kneel several saints, male and female, among them St. Catherine with her wheel, St. Agnes with her lamb, and St. Cecilia crowned with flowers. Beneath the principal picture there is a row of seven small ones, forming the predella, and representing various incidents in the life of St. Dominic. The whole measures about seven and a half feet high by six feet in width. It is painted in distemper; the glories round the heads of the sacred personages are in gold; the colours are the most delicate and vivid imaginable, and the ample draperies have the long folds which recall the school of Giotto; the gaiety and harmony of the tints, the expression of the various heads, the divine rapture of the angels with their air of immortal youth, and the devout reverence of the other personages, the unspeakable serenity and beauty of the whole composition, render this picture worthy of the celebrity it has enjoyed for more than four centuries. It was painted by Frate Angelico for the church of St. Dominic at Fiesole, where it remained till the beginning of the present century. How obtained it does not appear, but it was purchased by the French Government in 1812, and is now to be seen in the long gallery of the Louvre, on the left hand near the entrance.*

* A very good set of outlines were engraved and published at Paris, with explanatory notes by A. W. Schlegel; and to those who have no opportunity of seeing the original, these engravings will convey some faint idea of the composition, and of the exquisite and benign beauty of the angelic heads.

It is a curious circumstance that the key of the chapel of Pope Nicholas V. in the Vatican, in which Angelico painted some of his most beautiful frescoes, was for two centuries lost, and few persons were aware of their existence, fewer still set any value on them. In 1769 those who wished to see them were obliged to enter by a window.

Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole died at Rome in 1455, and is buried there in the church of Santa Maria *sopra Minerva*, where his monument may now be seen and contemplated with that reverence due to his excelling powers as an artist and his most pious and blameless life.

MASACCIO.

BORN 1400, DIED 1443.

IT is easily conceivable that, during the forty years which Lorenzo Ghiberti devoted to his great work, and to other undertakings on which he was employed at intervals, the assistance he required in completing his own designs, in drawing, modelling, casting, polishing, should have formed round him a school of young artists who worked and studied under his eye. The kind of work on which they were employed gave these young men great superiority in the knowledge of the human form, and in effects of relief, light and shade, &c. The application of the sciences of anatomy, mathematics, and geometry to the arts of design, began to be more fully understood. This early school of painters was favourably distinguished above the later schools of Italy by a generous feeling of mutual aid, emulation, and admiration among the youthful students, far removed from the detestable jealousies, the stabbings, poisonings, and conspiracies, which we read of in the seventeenth century. Among those who frequented the atelier of Lorenzo were Paolo Uccello, the first who applied geometry to the study of perspective; he attached himself to this pursuit with such unwearied assiduity, that it had nearly turned

16. - Tomaso di San Giovanni, called Masaccio.

From the Portrait in the Brancacci Chapel.

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his brain, and it was for his use and that of Brunelleschi that Manetti, one of the earliest Greek scholars and mathematicians in modern Europe, translated the 'Elements of Euclid;' Maso Finiguerra, who invented the art of engraving on copper; Pollaiuolo, the first painter who studied anatomy by dissection, and who became the instructor of Michael Angelo; and Masolino, who had been educated under Starnina, the best colourist of that time.

Paolo Uccello was one of the first of the early painters who studied the imitation of animals, particularly birds (*Uccelli*,—whence he derived his surname) and horses. He assisted Ghiberti in modelling the animals and foliage introduced into his first set of gates, and by him there is a curious picture (lately acquired) in our National Gallery, 'The Battle of Sant' Egidio' (1416), in which Carlo Malatesta of Rimini and his nephew Galeazzo were taken prisoners: the young Galeazzo, with his fair hair uncovered, is seen in front. This picture is historically interesting and most curious, as the earliest attempt to represent such a scene. The horses, which appear to us absolutely lifeless and wooden, were wonderful for the time.

There was also a young boy, scarcely in his teens, who learned to draw and model by studying the works of Ghiberti, and who, though not considered as his disciple, after a while left all the regular pupils far behind him. He had come from a little village about eighteen miles from Florence, called San Giovanni, and of his parentage and early years little is recorded, and that little is doubtful. His name was properly Tommaso Guido, or, from the

place of his birth, Maso di San Giovanni; but from his abstracted air, his utter indifference to the usual sports and pursuits of boyhood, his negligent dress and manners, his companions called him *Masaccio*, which might be translated *ugly* or *slovenly Tom;* and by this reproachful nickname one of the most illustrious of painters is now known throughout the world and to all succeeding generations. Masaccio was one of those rare and remarkable men whose vocation is determined beyond recall almost from infancy. He made his first essays as a child in his native village; and in the house in which he was born they long preserved the effigy of an old woman spinning, which he had painted when a mere boy on the wall of his chamber, astonishing for its life-like truth. Coming to Florence when about thirteen, he commenced his studies, acquiring the principles of design under Ghiberti and Donatello, and the art of perspective under Brunelleschi. The passionate energy and forgetfulness of all the common interests and pleasures of life with which he pursued his favourite art obtained him, at an early age, the notice of Cosmo de' Medici. Then intervened the civil troubles of the republic: Cosmo was banished; and Masaccio left Florence to pursue his studies at Rome with the same ardour, and with all the advantages afforded by the remains of ancient art collected there.

While at Rome, Masaccio painted in the church of San Clemente a Crucifixion, and some scenes from the life of St. Catherine of Alexandria; but unhappily these

have been so coarsely painted over, that every vestige of Masaccio's hand has disappeared—only the composition remains; and from the engravings which exist some idea may be formed of their beauty and simplicity.*

Cosmo de' Medici was recalled from banishment in 1433; and soon afterwards, probably through his patronage and influence, the completion of the chapel of St. Peter in the church of the Carmine, left unfinished by Masolino, was intrusted to Masaccio.

This chapel is in the form of a parallelogram, and three sides are covered with the frescoes, divided into twelve compartments, of which four are large and oblong, and the rest narrow and upright. All represent scenes from the life of St. Peter, except two, which are immediately on each side as you enter—Adam and Eve in Paradise, and the Expulsion from Paradise—which are here introduced because St. Peter, according to the popular legend, was keeper of the gates of Paradise. Of the twelve compartments, two had been painted by Masolino previous to 1415—the preaching of St. Peter, one of the small compartments, and the St. Peter and St John healing the Cripple, one of the largest. In this fresco are introduced two beautiful youths, or pages, in the dress of the patricians of Florence. Nothing can be more unaffectedly elegant; they would make us regret that the death of Masolino left others to complete his

* In Ottley's 'Early Italian School' there is an engraving of St. Catherine disputing with the Heathen Philosophers. In Rosini are others. Both these works may be consulted in the British Museum.

undertaking, had he not been succeeded by Masaccio and Filippino Lippi.

Six of the compartments, two large and four small ones, were executed by Masaccio. These represent St. Peter taking the Tribute-money from the mouth of the fish; Peter raising a Youth to Life; Peter baptizing the Converts; Peter and John healing the Sick and Lame; the same Apostles distributing Alms; and the Expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise.

The scene represented in one of these large compartments is an incident in the apocryphal History of the Apostles. Simon the Magician challenged Peter and Paul to restore to life a dead youth, who is said to have been a kinsman or nephew of the Roman emperor. The sorcerer fails of course. The Apostles resuscitate the youth, who kneels before them; the skull and bones near him represent the previous state of death: a crowd of spectators stand around beholding the miracle. The figures are half the size of life, and quite wonderful for the truth of expression, the variety of character, the simple dignity of the forms and attitudes. Masaccio died while at work on this grand picture, and the central group was painted some years later by Filippino Lippi, the son of Fra Filippo. The figure of the youth in the centre is traditionally said to be that of the painter Granacci, then a boy. Among the figures standing round are several contemporary portraits: Piero Guicciardini, father of the great historian; Luigi Pulci, the poet, author of the 'Morgante Maggiore;' Antonio Pollaiuolo, the painter; and others.

17.—Filippino Lippi.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

The fresco of the two Apostles Peter and John accused by Simon Magus before the throne of Nero, and the Crucifixion of Peter, are now attributed to Filippino Lippi. To him also belongs the grand figure of St. Paul standing before the Prison of St. Peter, which Raphael transferred with little alteration into his cartoon of St. Paul preaching at Athens. The four remaining compartments were added many years later (about 1470), by the same Filippino Lippi, of whom I must say a few words here, as we possess two of his pictures in the National Gallery, which indeed cannot be accounted among his best, but are genuine and valuable. He was the adopted son of Fra Filippo, some say his natural son by Lucrezia Buti; be this as it may, Fra Filippo, dying when he was about nine years old, bequeathed him to the love and care of another painter-monk, his friend Fra Diamante. With him and Sandro Botticelli, an admirable artist of that time, Filippino pursued his studies, and, gifted with all the genius of his father, but without his faults, he became one of the greatest painters of that time. There is a picture by him, painted when he was about twenty, in the church of the Badia at Florence, which for drawing, expression, vigorous colour, and beauty of every kind, appeared to me a wonder, even without regard to the early age of the painter when it was executed. It represents the Vision of St. Bernard (the same subject painted by his father and in our National Gallery, but treated in a very different manner). Another most admirable picture by him is the altarpiece of the enthroned Madonna and Child, attended by St. John the Baptist,

St. Zenobio, St. Bernard, and St. Vittorio, painted for the chapel of the Palazzo Pubblico, and now in the Gallery of Florence; and in the same gallery is the Adoration of the Magi—a richly-coloured splendid composition, with heads worthy of Raphael: this was painted in his twenty-fifth year. To his excellence as an artist Filippino united irreproachable morals and the most courteous and amiable manner, so that he was adored by his fellow-citizens, and when he died in 1505 he was carried to the grave with public honours, all the shops being closed along the way.

But to return to Masaccio. In considering his works, their superiority over all that painting had till then achieved or attempted is such, and so surprising, that there seems a kind of break in the progression of the art—as if Masaccio had overleaped suddenly the limits which his predecessors had found impassable; but Ghiberti and his Gates explain the seeming wonder. The chief excellences of Masaccio were those which he had attained, or at least conceived, in his early studies in modelling. He had learned from Ghiberti not merely the knowledge of form, but the effects of light and shade in giving relief and roundness to his figures, which, in comparison to those of his predecessors, seemed to start from the canvas. He was the first who successfully foreshortened the extremities. In most of the older pictures the figures appeared to stand on the points of their toes—the foreshortening of the foot, though often attempted with more or less success, seemed to present insurmountable difficulties. Masaccio added a precision in the drawing of

the naked figure, and a softness and harmony in colouring the flesh, never attained before his time, nor since surpassed till the days of Raphael and Titian. He excelled also in the expression and imitation of natural actions and feelings. In the fresco of St. Peter baptizing the Converts there is a youth who has just thrown off his garment, and stands in the attitude of one shivering with sudden cold. "This figure," says Lanzi, "formed an epoch in art." Add the animation and variety of character in his heads—so that it was said of him that he painted souls as well as bodies—and his free-flowing draperies, quite different from the longitudinal folds of the Giotto school, yet grand and simple; and we can form some idea of the combination of excellence with novelty of style which astonished his contemporaries. The Chapel of the Brancacci was for half a century what the Camere of Raphael in the Vatican have since become —a school for young artists. Vasari enumerates by name twenty painters who were accustomed to study there; among them, Lionardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Andrea del Sarto, Fra Bartolomeo, Perugino, Baccio Bandinelli, and the divine Raphael himself. Nothing less than first-rate genius ever yet inspired genius; and the Chapel of the Brancacci has been rendered as sacred and memorable by its association with such spirits, as it is precious and wondrous as a monument of art.

"In this chapel wrought
One of the Few, Nature's interpreters;
The Few, whom Genius gives as lights to shine—
MASACCIO; and he slumbers underneath.
Wouldst thou behold his monument? Look round,
And know that where we stand, stood oft and long,

Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself,
He and his haughty rival *—patiently,
Humbly, to learn of those who came before,
To steal a spark of their authentic fire,
Theirs who first broke the universal gloom—
Sons of the morning."—*Rogers.*

No mention is here made of Filippino Lippi, one of the brightest among these "sons of the morning," and whose fame has been merged in that of Masaccio—unjustly as we are now obliged to confess; but when Lanzi wrote, some of his finest pictures were attributed to others. With regard to his precursor Masaccio, of him little is known but his works. It is certain that he disappeared suddenly and mysteriously from Florence, in debt, leaving unfinished his finest fresco in the Brancacci chapel: documents discovered in the present century indicate that he died at Rome between 1427 and 1430.

The vexed question of his birth has also been set at rest† by recent investigations; it occurred in 1402 at Castel S. Giovanni di Val d'Arno, where his father was a notary. He showed as a child a propensity for drawing; at the age of 19 he was enrolled in the Grocers' Guild at Florence, and soon after entered that of the Painters. As to his early attainment of the most wonderful skill in art, we may recollect several other examples of precocious excellence: for instance, Ghiberti, already mentioned; Filippino, who painted a masterpiece at the age of twenty; Michael Angelo, who executed the marble pietà in St. Peter's at the

* Michael Angelo.

† See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, 'New History of Painting in Italy.

age of twenty-five; and Raphael, who was summoned to Rome to paint the great series of frescoes in the Vatican in his twenty-seventh year. The head of Masaccio, painted by himself, in the chapel of the Brancacci, in the story of the Tribute-money, represents him as a man apparently about four or five and thirty.* (See woodcut.)

* For all that can be known respecting the life of Masaccio, the date of his birth, and his share in the frescoes of the Brancacci Chapel, see the 'New History of Painting in Italy' by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, 1864-67.

BENOZZO GOZZOLI.

BORN 1424, DIED ABOUT 1485.

FRA GIOVANNI ANGELICO possessed, among his other amiable qualities, one true characteristic of a generous mind, the willingness to impart whatever he knew to others; and notwithstanding the retirement in which he lived, he had several pupils: but that which formed the principal charm and merit of his productions, the impress of individual mind, the profound sentiment of piety, was incommunicable except to a kindred spirit. Hence it is that his influence, like the Prophetic mantle, fell on those who had the power to catch it and retain it, and is more apparent in its general results, as seen in the schools of Umbria and Venice, than in any particular painter or any particular work. Cosimo Roselli, a distinguished artist of that time, is supposed to have studied under Angelico, and certainly began by imitating his manner: afterwards he painted like Masaccio, and then fell into a capricious manner, which strikes us as at once hard and fantastic. There is a picture by him in our National Gallery (an altarpiece dedicated to St. Jerome), and of great interest, though marked by his characteristic faults. A much more celebrated name is

18.—Benozzo Gozzoli.

From Vasari's History.

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that of Benozzo Gozzoli, who was born at Florence about 1424.

We know very little of the life of this extraordinary man; but that little shows him to have been worthy of the particular love of his master, whose favourite pupil and companion he was, and, during the last years of Angelico's life, his assistant. According to Vasari, Benozzo was an excellent man, and a good and pious Christian, but he had no vocation for the cloister. No painter of the time had such a lively sense of all the beauty and variety of the external and material world. For him beauty existed wherever he looked—wherever he moved. He took such delight in the practice of his art, that he had little time for other pursuits. He succeeded to the popularity of Angelico as a painter of sacred subjects, into which he introduced much more ornament, decorating them with landscapes, buildings, animals, &c. It appears that he did not design the figure more correctly than Angelico, nor equal him in the profound feeling and celestial air of his heads; but he has shown more invention and variety in his compositions, and mingled with his grace a certain gaiety of conception, a degree of movement and dramatic feeling, which are not seen in the works of Angelico.

Benozzo, before the death of his master, painted some frescoes in the cathedral at Orvieto, and in the churches of the little town of Montefalco near Foligno, and also at Rome in the church of the Ara-celi. The former remain, but those in the Ara-celi have long since been destroyed. All these were more or less in the style of his master. After the death of Angelico, Benozzo was

employed to paint the church of San Geminiano, a little city on the road from Florence to Sienna. Here he painted the Death of St. Sebastian, and the history of St. Augustin; and here some of his own peculiar characteristics were first displayed. For Pietro de' Medici he painted a chapel in the palace of the Medici (now the Palazzo Ricardi at Florence), the subject being the Adoration of the Magi: over the altar was the Nativity of our Lord (now removed); angels scattering flowers, singing and rejoicing, approach on each side; while round the walls is still seen the journey of the Wise Kings from the land of the East, and their return to their own country, in a procession of figures on foot and on horseback, represented with the utmost elegance and animation. In all the paintings he executed at this time (1460) and afterwards, Benozzo introduced many figures, generally the portraits of distinguished inhabitants of the place, or those of his friends, grouped as spectators round the principal incident or personage represented, having nothing to do with the action, but so beautifully managed, that, far from appearing intrusive, they rather add to the solemnity and the poetry of the scene, as if he would fain represent these sacred events as belonging to all times, and still, as it were, passing before our eyes. This observation must be borne in mind as generally applicable to all sacred pictures, in which the apparent anachronisms are not really such if properly considered. Benozzo carried this and other characteristics of his own original style still further in his greatest work, the decoration of the Campo Santo.

When the troubles of war, famine, plague, and in-

testine divisions which had distracted Pisa during the first half of the fifteenth century had subsided, the citizens of that rich and active republic resumed those works of peace which had been long interrupted, and resolved to complete the painting of their far-famed cemetery, the Campo Santo. One whole side, the north wall, was yet untouched: they intrusted the work to Benozzo Gozzoli, who, though now old (upwards of sixty) and worn with toil and trouble, did not hesitate to undertake a task which, to use Vasari's strong expression, was nothing less than "*terribilissima*," and enough "to frighten a whole legion of painters." In twenty-four compartments he represented the whole history of the Old Testament from Noah down to King Solomon. The endless fertility of fancy and invention displayed in these compositions; the pastoral beauty of some of the scenes, the Scriptural sublimity of others; the hundreds of figures introduced, many of them portraits of his own time; the dignity and beauty of the heads; the exquisite grace of some of the figures, almost equal to Raphael; the ample draperies, the gay rich colours, the profusion of accessories, as buildings, landscapes, flowers, animals, and the care and exactness with which he has rendered the costume of that time—render this work of Benozzo one of the most extraordinary monuments of the fifteenth century. But it would have been more than extraordinary, it would have been *miraculous*, had it been executed in the space of two years, as Lanzi relates — trusting to a popular tradition which a moment's reflection would

have shown to be incredible. It appears from authentic records still existing in the city of Pisa that Benozzo was engaged on this great work not less than sixteen years, from 1468 to 1484.*

Of the original frescoes, three out of the twenty-four are entirely destroyed; the others have peeled off in some parts, but in others have been coarsely restored; in many figures the expression of the features and the lucid harmony of the colours have remained. Each compartment contains several incidents and events artlessly grouped together. Thus we have Hagar's presumption, her castigation by Sarah, the Visit of the three Angels, &c., in one picture. Among the most beautiful subjects may be mentioned the Vineyard of Noah, the first which Benozzo painted, as a trial of his skill. On the left of this composition are two female figures — one who comes tripping along with a basket of grapes on her head, the other holding up her basket for more — which are models of pastoral grace and simplicity. In the Building of the Tower of Babel a crowd of spectators have assembled to witness the work; among them are introduced the figures of Cosmo de' Medici, the Father of his country, and his two grandsons Lorenzo and Giuliano, with Poliziano and other personages, all in the costume of that time. In the Marriage Feast of Jacob and Rachel he has introduced the two graceful dancing figures which are given in the woodcut. In the Recognition of Joseph

* Those who would form an idea of its immensity, considered as the work of one hand, may consult the large set of engravings from the Campo Santo, published by Lasinio in 1821.

he has painted a profusion of rich architectural decoration—palaces, colonnades, balconies, and porticoes—in the style of the time; and in the distance we have, instead of the Egyptian Pyramids, a view of the Cathedral of Pisa!

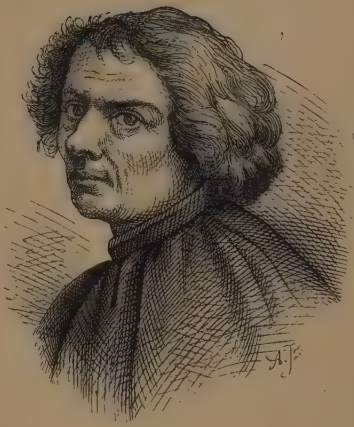
Soon after the completion of the last compartment, the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon (of which unhappily scarce a fragment remains), Benozzo Gozzoli died at Pisa, in his seventy-eighth year. The grateful and admiring Pisans, among whom he had resided for sixteen years in great honour and esteem, had presented him in the course of his work with a vault or sepulchre just beneath the compartment which contains the history of Joseph, and in this spot he lies buried, with an inscription intimating that his best monument consists in the works around. Benozzo left an only daughter, who after his death inherited the modest little dwelling which he had purchased for himself on the Carraia di San Francesco.

Benozzo's principal works, being in fresco, remain attached to the walls on which they were painted. Those only of the Campo Santo are engraved. In our National Gallery we have a splendid and valuable specimen of this master, and one of undisputed authenticity. It was painted for the charitable association called the "Compagnia di San Marco," at Florence, and represents the usual subject of the Madonna and Child enthroned, attended by the patrons of Florence and other saints. There is another, a small picture, representing Paris and his companions carrying off Helen and her attend-

ants, which probably ornamented a marriage cassone or bridal chest.* A picture in distemper of St. Thomas Aquinas is in the Louvre (72), and is the same mentioned by Vasari as having been painted for the Cathedral of Pisa.†

* When I first saw this beautiful and curious little picture in the Lombardi collection it was ignorantly styled "The Brides of Venice," and attributed to Gentile da Fabriano!

† This picture is most curious as an historical document, and an instance of the manner in which art was employed to illustrate the characters, opinions, and controversies of the time. See, in the *Legends of the Monastic Orders*,' the Life of Thomas Aquinas.



19.—Andrea del Castagno.

From Vasari's History.

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ANDREA DI CASTAGNO,

BORN 1403, DIED 1477;

AND

LUCA SIGNORELLI,

BORN 1440, DIED 1521.

TOWARDS the close of the fifteenth century we find Lorenzo de' Medici, *the Magnificent*, master of the Florentine republic, as it was still denominated, though now under the almost absolute power of one man. The mystic and spiritual school of Angelico and his followers no longer found admirers in the city of Florence, where the study of classical literature, and the enthusiastic admiration of the Medici for antique art, led to the cultivation and development of a style wholly different; the painters, instead of confining themselves to Scriptural events and characters, began at this time to take their subjects from mythology and classical history: meantime the progress made in the knowledge of form, the use of colours, and all the technical appliances of the art, prepared the way for the appearance of those great masters who in the succeeding century carried painting in all its departments to the highest perfection, and have never yet been surpassed.

About 1460 a certain Neapolitan painter, named ANTONELLO DA MESSINA, having travelled into the Netherlands, learned there from Johan v. Eyk and his scholars the art of managing oil-colours: being at Venice, on his return, he communicated the secret to a Venetian painter, Domenico Veneziano, with whom he had formed a friendship, and who, having acquired considerable reputation, was called to Florence to assist ANDREA DI CASTAGNO in painting a chapel in Santa Maria Novella. Andrea, who had been a scholar of Masaccio, was one of the most famous painters of the time, and a favourite of the Medici family: on the occasion of the conspiracy of the Pazzi, when the Archbishop of Pisa and his confederates were hung by the magistrates from the windows of the palace, Andrea was called upon to represent, on the walls of the Podestà, this terrible execution—"fit subject for fit hand"—and he succeeded so well, that he obtained the surname of Andrea *degl' Impiccati*, which may be translated Andrea *the Hangman;* he afterwards earned a yet more infamous designation—Andrea *the Assassin*. Envious of the reputation which Domenico had acquired by the beauty and brilliance of his colours, he first by a show of the most devoted friendship obtained his secret, and then seized the opportunity when he accompanied Domenico one night to serenade his mistress, and stabbed him to the heart. He contrived to escape suspicion, and allowed one or two innocent persons to suffer for his crime; but on his deathbed, ten years afterwards, he confessed his guilt, and has been consigned to merited infamy. Very few works of this painter remain: they are much praised by Lanzi,

20.—Sandro Botticelli.

From Vasari's History.

but, however great their merit, it is difficult to get rid of the associations of disgust and horror connected with the character of the man. One of his pictures, a figure of the Magdalene in the Belle Arti, at Florence (No. 37), as likewise those in the Berlin Museum (1055 and 1139), struck me as intensely disagreeable—hard, almost cruel, in character. He seems to have preferred penitential subjects, such as St. Jerome beating his bleeding breast with a stone, or Mary Magdalene looking emaciated and despairing. It is also remarkable that none of his remaining pictures are painted in oil-colours, but all are in distemper, as if he had feared to avail himself of the secret acquired by such flagitious means, and the knowledge of which, though not the practice, became general before his death.

In the year 1471 Sixtus IV. became pope. Though by no means endued with a taste for art, he resolved to emulate the Medici family, whose example and patronage had diffused the fashion, if not the feeling, throughout all Italy; and having built that beautiful chapel in the Vatican called by his name, and since celebrated as the *Sistine* Chapel, the next thing was to decorate it with appropriate paintings. On one side of it was to be represented the history of Moses; on the other, the history of Christ: the old law and the new law, the Hebrew and the Christian dispensation, thus placed in contrast and illustrating each other. As there were no distinguished painters at that time in Rome, Sixtus invited from Florence those of the Tuscan artists who had the greatest reputation in their native country.

The first of these was SANDRO (*i. e.* Alessandro) FILI-

PEPI, called BOTTICELLI, remarkable for being one of the earliest painters who treated mythological subjects on a small scale as decorations for furniture, and the first who made drawings for the purpose of being engraved: these, as well as his religious pictures, he treated in a fanciful, allegorical style. Six of his pictures are in the Museum at Berlin—one an undraped Venus; and two are in the Louvre. Sandro was a pupil of the monk Fra Filippo already mentioned, and after his death took charge of his young son Filippino Lippi, who excelled both his father and his preceptor, and became one of the greatest painters of his time.* In the south corridor of the Florence Gallery hangs a picture by Sandro Botticelli of surpassing beauty. It represents the Virgin with the infant Saviour on her knee, whom she supports with one hand, while with the other she is in the act of writing her famous and beautiful hymn ('My soul doth magnify the Lord!') on the leaf of a book held by an angel. The angel behind her throne is the portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici when a boy.† Another exquisite picture in the first room of the Tuscan School represents the "Calumny of Apelles."

Another painter employed by Pope Sixtus was LUCA SIGNORELLI of Cortona, the first who not only drew the human form with admirable correctness, but, aided by a degree of anatomical knowledge rare in those days, threw such spirit and expression into the various attitudes of

* He completed the frescoes in the chapel of the Carmine at Florence, left unfinished by Masaccio, as already related.

† There is a poor duplicate or copy of this picture in the Louvre, No. 195; nor is our specimen in the National Gallery first rate.

21.—Luca Signorelli.

From Vasari's History, ed. 1568.

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his figures, that his great work, the frescoes of the Cathedral of Orvieto, representing the Last Judgment, were studied and even imitated by Michael Angelo. This original and illustrious painter was born at Cortona in 1441. We have no reason to suppose that he was distinguished, like so many of his compeers, by any early or precocious excellence in his art; his first works, of which we have any account, date about 1472, when he was thirty-seven. Signorelli was a man of great learning and industry as well as original genius—of irreproachable life and amiable manners; courteous and helpful to those who needed his assistance; to his numerous scholars kind and communicative, as became a great and generous artist. His principal works are the grand mural frescoes at Orvieto, in the Sistine Chapel at Rome, and in the convent of Monte Uliveto, near Sienna. His moveable pictures and altarpieces are of great value. Whatever subject he treated, whether religious or classical, he treated with decision, with power and grandeur in the grouping and forms, and with singular depth and originality in the heads. He was famous in his lifetime, enriched by constant employment, and is recorded as having been several times elected as chief magistrate of his native city of Cortona, then free and prosperous. The year of Signorelli's death is not exactly known, but he certainly lived to be upwards of eighty. This painter was apparently a favourite of Fuseli, whose compositions frequently remind us of the long limbs and animated, but sometimes exaggerated, action of Signorelli. We have, as yet, no picture by him in our National Gallery.

DOMENICO DAL GHIRLANDAJO.

BORN 1451, DIED 1495.

DOMENICO DAL GHIRLANDAJO was also employed in the Sistine Chapel, but he was then young, and, of his two pictures there, one only remains, the Calling of St. Peter and St. Andrew;—so inferior to his later productions, that we do not recognise here the hand of him who became afterwards one of the greatest and most memorable painters of his time.

Domenico Corradi, or Bigordi, was born at Florence in 1451, and was educated by his father for his own profession, that of a goldsmith. In this art he acquired great skill, and displayed in his designs uncommon elegance of fancy. He was the first who invented the silver ornaments in the form of a wreath or garland (*Ghirlanda*) which became a fashion with the Florentine women, and from which he obtained the name of Ghirlandajo, or *Grillandajo*, as it is sometimes written. At the age of four-and-twenty he quitted the profession of goldsmith, and became a painter. While employed in his father's workshop he had amused himself with taking the likenesses of all the persons he saw, so rapidly, and with so much liveliness and truth, as to astonish every one: the exact drawing and modelling of forms,

22.—Domenico Corradi, called Del Ghirlandajo.

By himself. From the Choir of Sta. Maria Novella, Florence.

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the inventive fancy exercised in his mechanical art, and the turn for portraiture, are displayed in all his subsequent productions. These were so many in number, so various in subject, and so admirable, that only a few of them can be noticed here. After he returned from Rome his first work was the painting of a chapel of the Vespucci family, in the church of Ognissanti (All Saints), in which he introduced, in 1485, the portrait of Amerigo Vespuccio the navigator, who afterwards gave his name to a new world.

Ghirlandajo painted a chapel for a certain Florentine citizen, Francesco Sassetti, in the church of the Trinità. Here he represented the whole life of Francesco's patron saint, St. Francis, in a series of pictures full of feeling and dramatic power. As he was confined to the popular histories and traditions, which had been treated again and again by successive painters, and in which it was necessary to conform to certain fixed and prescribed rules, it was difficult to introduce any variety in the conception. Yet he has done this simply by the mere force of expression. The most excellent of these frescoes is the Death of St. Francis, surrounded by the monks of his order, in which the aged heads, full of grief, awe, resignation, are depicted with wonderful skill: at the foot of the bier is an old bishop chanting the litanies, with spectacles on his nose, which is the earliest known representation of these implements, then recently invented. On one side of the picture is the kneeling figure of Francesco Sassetti, and on the other Madonna Nera, his wife. All these histories of St. Francis are engraved in Lasinio's 'Early Florentine Masters,' as are

also the magnificent frescoes in the choir of Santa Maria Novella, his greatest work. This he undertook for a generous and public-spirited citizen of Florence, Giovanni Tornabuoni, who agreed to repair the choir at his own cost, and, moreover, to pay Ghirlandajo one thousand two hundred gold ducats for painting the walls in fresco, and to add two hundred more if he were well satisfied with the performance.

Ghirlandajo devoted four years to his task. He painted on the right-hand wall the history of St. John the Baptist; and, on the left, various incidents from the life of the Virgin. One of the most beautiful represents the Birth of the Virgin: female attendants, charming graceful figures, are aiding the mother or intent on the newborn child; while a lady, in the elegant costume of the Florentine ladies of that time, and holding a handkerchief in her hand, is seen advancing, as if to pay her visit of congratulation. This is the portrait of Ginevra de' Benci, one of the loveliest women of the time. He has introduced her again as one of the attendants in the Visit of the Virgin to St. Elizabeth. In the other pictures he has introduced the figures of Lorenzo de' Medici, Poliziano, Demetrio Greco, Marsilio Ficino, and other celebrated persons (of whom there are notices in Roscoe's 'Life of Lorenzo de' Medici'), besides his own portrait and those of many other persons of that time.

The idea of crowding these sacred and mystical subjects with portraits of real persons and representations of familiar objects may seem, on first view, shocking to the taste, ridiculous anachronisms, and destructive of all solemnity and unity of feeling. Such, however, is

not the case, but the reverse. In the first place, the sacred and ideal personages are never portraits from nature, and are very loftily conceived in point of expression and significance. In the second place, the *real* personages introduced are seldom or never actors; they are merely attendants and spectators in events which may be conceived to belong to all time, and to have no especial locality; and they have so much dignity in their aspects, the costumes are so picturesque, and the grouping is so fine and imaginative, that only the coldest and most pedantic critic could wish them absent.

When Ghirlandajo had finished this grand series of pictures, his patron, Giovanni Tornabuoni, declared himself well pleased; but, at the same time, expressed a wish that Ghirlandajo would be content with the sum first stipulated, and forego the additional two hundred ducats. The high-minded painter, who esteemed glory and honour much more than riches, immediately withdrew his claim, saying that he cared far more to have satisfied his employer than for any amount of payment.

Besides his frescoes, Ghirlandajo painted many pictures in oil and in distemper. There is one of great beauty in the Louvre*—the Visitation—that is, the visit which Mary, the mother of our Lord, paid to her cousin Elizabeth. In this picture Elizabeth kneels as to a superior; the two attendant women are Mary Cleophas and Mary Salome. But the subject he most frequently repeated was the Adoration of the Magi; perhaps because it gave him the opportunity of introducing brilliant accessories, as crowns, vases, embroidered garments,

* No. 204

and jewelled ornaments, in which, as well as in the higher departments of painting, he excelled. His draperies are elegant, but sometimes *rather* fluttering and fantastic. The finest picture by him I have ever seen is the altarpiece in the chapel of the Innocenti (the Foundling Hospital) at Florence.

It may be said, on the whole, that the attention of Ghirlandajo was directed less to the delineation of form than to the expression of his heads and the imitation of life and nature as exhibited in feature and countenance. He also carried the mechanical and technical part of his art to a perfection it had not before attained. He was the best colourist in fresco who had yet appeared, and his colours have stood extremely well to this day.*

Another characteristic which renders Ghirlandajo very interesting as an artist was his diligent and progressive improvement; every successive production was better than the last. He was also an excellent worker in mosaic, which, from its durability, he used to call "*painting for eternity.*"

To his rare and various accomplishments as an artist, Ghirlandajo added the most amiable qualities as a man —qualities which obtained him the love as well as the admiration of his fellow-citizens. He was, says Vasari, "the delight of the age in which he lived." He was still in the prime of life and in the full possession

* Except where the whole surface has been *destroyed* by damp or accident, as in several of the frescoes in the choir of S. Maria Novella.

23.—Andrea Verrocchio.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

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of conscious power—so that he was heard to wish they would give him the walls all round the city to cover with frescoes—when he was seized with sudden illness, and died, at the age of forty-four, to the infinite grief of his numerous scholars, by whom he was interred, with every demonstration of mournful respect, in the church of Santa Maria Novella, in the year 1495. His two brothers, Davide and Benedetto, were also painters, and assisted him in the execution of his great works; and his son Ridolfo Ghirlandajo became afterwards an excellent artist, but he belongs to a later period.

Ghirlandajo formed many scholars; among them was the great Michael Angelo.

Contemporary with Ghirlandajo lived an artist, memorable for having aided with his instructions both Michael Angelo and Lionardo da Vinci. This was Andrea Verrocchio (b. 1432, d. 1488), who was a goldsmith and sculptor in marble and bronze, and also a painter, though in painting his works are few and little known. He drew and modelled admirably, but his style of painting is rather hard and formal. He is celebrated through the celebrity of the artists formed in his school; and is said to have been the first who took casts in plaster from life as aids in the study of form.

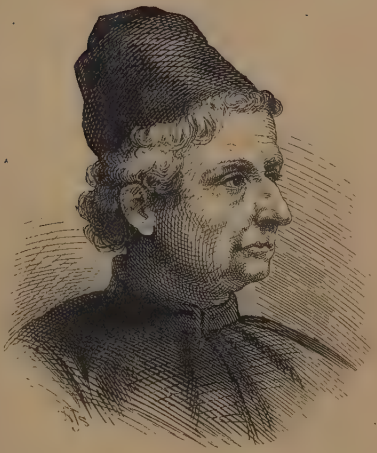
ANTONIO DEL POLLAIUOLO.

BORN ABOUT 1430, DIED 1498.

AMONG the assistants of Ghiberti one more must be particularly commemorated. ANTONIO DEL POLLAIUOLO, like many other great Florentine artists, began his professional career as a goldsmith and a modeller and carver in wood and metal. To be the sons of a poulterer (*Pollaiuolo*, whence they derive their name) does not seem to promise much in regard to art; but the father of Antonio and Piero was soon aware of the talent of his sons, and found means to place the eldest under the tuition of Bertuccio, the father-in-law of Lorenzo Ghiberti. Antonio at once distinguished himself by his aptitude and his skill in modelling and designing, and Ghiberti selected him as one of his assistants in the second Bronze Gate of the Baptistery. On the rich border of foliage and figures on the left hand, and about four feet from the ground, is seen the quail modelled by Antonio, of which Vasari says, "it wants nothing of life but the power to fly."

After executing many beautiful works in metal, and particularly part of the elaborate silver altar (*Dossale*) for the same church of St. John the Baptist, Antonio applied himself to painting, in which, however excellent in some things, he retained a certain hardness and formality of design derived from his first profession.

The altarpiece which he painted for Antonio Pucci in



24.—Antonio del Pollaiuolo.

By Filippino Lippi. From the Brancacci Chapel.

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1475 is now in our National Gallery. It is a known and celebrated picture, and one of our most valuable acquisitions, but not attractive considered as a religious work. The young Roman soldier who died for his faith is here a commonplace and contorted figure; the head has none of that fervent aspiration and love which we are accustomed to look for in St. Sebastian. It is, in fact, a portrait, and that of a celebrated man, Gino Capponi. The two soldiers in front bending their cross-bows are the most admired figures in this picture; the technical skill displayed in the foreshortening and in the expression of strong bodily effort was new at that time, and was a kind of merit which the learned and the unlearned would equally understand. Antonio Pucci, in paying for it the stipulated 300 crowns, expressed his satisfaction, and was heard to declare that the money only paid the cost of the colours—it would not recompense the skill of the artist. Pollaiuolo was soon afterwards called to Rome, employed there by Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI., and executed the famous and elaborate, but not quite satisfactory, monument of Sixtus IV. in the Vatican. Pollaiuolo, as an artist, had that leaning to pagan and classical taste which was the fashion of the time; he was a capital designer, but deficient in sentiment and grace. As a man, he was esteemed for his exemplary life no less than for his talents, and died at Rome in 1498, rich and prosperous, leaving a dowry of 5000 gold crowns to each of his two daughters. He and his brother Piero were buried in the same tomb, in S. Peter-in-Vincula, at Rome.

ANDREA MANTEGNA.

BORN 1431, DIED 1506.

FOR a while we must leave beautiful Florence and her painters, who were striving after perfection by imitating what they saw in nature—the common appearances of the objects, animate and inanimate, around them—and turn to another part of Italy, where there arose a man of genius who pursued a wholly different course; at least he started from a different point; and who exercised for a time a great influence on all the painters of Italy, including those of Florence. This was ANDREA MANTEGNA, particularly interesting to English readers, as his most celebrated work, the Triumph of Julius Cæsar, is now preserved in the palace of Hampton Court, and has formed part of the royal collection ever since the days of Charles I.

Andrea Mantegna was the son of very poor and obscure parents, and was born near Padua in 1431. All we learn of his early childhood amounts to this—that he was employed in keeping sheep; and being conducted to the city, entered, we know not by what chance, the school of FRANCESCO SQUARCIONE.

About the middle of the 15th century, from which time we date the revival of letters in Europe, the study

25.—Andrea Mantegna.

From Vasari's History, ed. 1568.

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of the Greek language, and a taste for the works of the classical authors, had become more and more diffused through Italy. We are told that "to write Latin correctly, to understand the allusions of the best authors, to learn at least the rudiments of Greek, were the objects of every cultivated mind." Classical literature was particularly studied at the University of Padua. Squarcione, a native of that city, and by profession a painter, was early smitten with this passion for *the antique*. He not only travelled over all Italy, but visited Greece in search of the remains of ancient art. Of those which he could not purchase or remove, he obtained casts or copies; and, returning to Padua, he opened there a school or academy for painters, not indeed the most celebrated nor the most influential, but at that time the best attended in all Italy. Squarcione numbered one hundred and thirty-seven pupils, and was considered the best teacher of his time: yet of all this crowd of students the names of three only are preserved, and of these only one has attained lasting celebrity. By Squarcione himself we hear only of one undoubted picture displaying great talent; but it appears that he painted little, employed his scholars to execute what works were confided to him, and gave himself up to the business of instruction.

Andrea Mantegna was only known in the academy of Squarcione as a poor boy, whose talent and docility rendered him a favourite with his master, and at length his adopted son. He worked early and late, copying with assiduity the models which were set before him, drawing from the fragments of statues, the busts, the

bas-reliefs, ornaments, and vases with which Squarcione had enriched his academy. At the age of seventeen Andrea painted his first great picture for the church of Santa Sofia in Padua (now lost), and when nineteen he executed the most important frescoes in the chapel of St. Christopher in the Eremitani—here he represented on the vault the four evangelists; his imagination and his pencil familiarized only with the forms of classical art, he gave to these sacred personages the air and attitude of heathen philosophers, but they excited nevertheless great applause.

At this time the Venetian Jacopo Bellini, father of the two great Bellini, of whom we shall have to speak presently, arrived in Padua, where he was employed to paint some pictures. He was considered as the rival of Squarcione, both as a painter and teacher. Andrea was captivated by the talents and conversation of the Venetian; and yet more attracted by the charms of his daughter Nicolosia, whose hand he asked and obtained from her father. Jacopo Bellini was of opinion that he who had given such early proofs of assiduity and ability must ultimately succeed; and though Andrea was still poor and but little known, and the Bellini family already rich and celebrated, he did not hesitate to bestow his daughter on the youthful and modest suitor. This marriage, and what he regarded as the revolt of his favourite disciple, so enraged Squarcione that he never forgave the offence. Andrea having soon after completed a picture which excelled his first, his old master attacked it with the most merciless severity, and publicly denounced its faults: the figures, he said, were stiff, were

cold—without life, without nature ; and he observed sarcastically that Andrea should have painted them white, like marble, and then the colour would have harmonized with the drawing. This criticism came with a particularly ill grace from him who had taught the very principles he now condemned, and Andrea felt it bitterly. The Italian annotator of Vasari remarks very truly, that excessive praise often turns the brain of the weak man, and renders the man of genius slothful and careless; but that severe and unjust censure, while it crushes mediocrity, acts as a spur and excitement to real genius. Andrea showed that he had sufficient strength of mind to rise superior to both praise and censure ; he felt with disgust and pain the malignity of his old master ; but he knew that much of his criticism was just. Instead of showing any sense of injury or discouragement, he set to work with fresh ardour ; he drew and studied from nature, instead of confining himself to the antique ; he imitated the fresher and livelier colouring of his new relations, the Bellini ; and his next picture, which represented a legend of St. Christopher, was so superior to the last, that it silenced the open cavilling of Squarcione, though it could not extinguish his animosity, perhaps rather added to it; for Andrea had introduced among the numerous figures in his fresco that of Squarcione himself, and the likeness was by no means a flattering one. Notwithstanding the admiration which these and other works excited in his native city, the enmity of his old master seems to have rendered Padua intolerable as a residence. Andrea therefore went to Verona, where he executed several frescoes and some smaller pictures ;

and being invited to Mantua by Ludovico Gonzaga, he finally entered the service of that prince. The native courtesy of Andrea's manners, as well as his acquired knowledge and his ability in his profession, recommended him to his new patron, who loaded him with honours and favours.

Some years after he had taken up his residence in Mantua, and had executed for the Marquis Ludovico, and his son and successor Frederigo, several works which yet remain, Andrea was invited to Rome by Pope Innocent VIII., to paint for him a chapel in the Belvedere. The Marquis of Mantua permitted him to depart but for a time only; the permission was accompanied by gifts and by letters of recommendation to the pontiff; and the more to show the esteem in which the painter was held, he bestowed on him the honour of knighthood.

Mantegna, on his arrival in Rome, set himself to work with his characteristic diligence and enthusiasm, and covered the walls and the ceiling with a multiplicity of subjects, executed, says Vasari, with the delicacy of miniatures. These beautiful paintings existed till late in the last century, when Pius VI. destroyed the chapel to make room for his new museum.* While Andrea was employed at Rome by Pope Innocent, a pleasant and characteristic incident occurred, which does honour both to him and to the pope. His holiness was at this time much occupied and disturbed by state affairs; and it

* "Contrary to the advice of those who entreated him to abstain from such barbarity" (*tanta barbarie*). The "New Museum" is now the famous *Braccio Nuovo* of the Vatican.

happened that the payments were not made with the regularity which Andrea desired. The pope sometimes visited the artist at his work, and one day he asked him the meaning of a certain female figure on which he was painting. Andrea replied, with a significant look, that he was trying to represent *Discretion*. The pope, understanding him at once, replied, "If you would place *Discretion* in fitting company, you should place Patience at her side." Andrea took the hint, and said no more; and when his work was completed, the pope not only paid him the sums stipulated, but rewarded him munificently besides. About the year 1487 he returned to Mantua, where he built himself a magnificent house, painted inside and outside by his own hand, and in which he resided in great esteem and honour until his death in 1506. He was buried in the church of his patron saint, St. Andrew, where his monument in bronze and several of his pictures may yet be seen.

The existing works of Andrea Mantegna are so numerous that I shall record here only the most remarkable, and the occasions on which they were painted.

In the year 1488 Andrea executed for the Marquis Gian-Francesco (grandson of his first friend Ludovico Gonzaga) the famous frieze representing in nine compartments the Triumph of Julius Cæsar after his conquest of Gaul.* These were placed round the upper part of a hall in the palace of San Sebastiano, at Mantua, which

* The dates are taken from the Chronological Supplement to the 'Life of Mantegna' in the Lemonnier edition of Vasari, vol. v., 1849; from which it appears that Mantegna began this frieze in the beginning of the year 1488, before he went to Rome, and finished it, after his return, in 1492.

Francesco had lately erected. They hung in this palace for a century and a half. When Mantua was sacked and pillaged in 1629, they, with many other pictures, escaped; the Duke Carlo Gonzaga, reduced to poverty by the vices and prodigality of his predecessors, and the wars and calamities of his own time, sold his gallery of pictures to our King Charles I. for 20,000*l.*, and these and other works of Andrea Mantegna came to England with the rest of the Mantuan collection. When King Charles's pictures were sold by the Parliament after his death, the Triumph of Julius Cæsar was purchased for 1000*l.*, but on the return of Charles II. it was restored to the royal collection, how or by whom does not appear. The nine pictures now hang in the palace of Hampton Court. They are painted in distemper on twilled linen, which has been stretched on frames, and originally placed against the wall with ornamented pilasters dividing the compartments. In their present faded and dilapidated condition, hurried and uninformed visitors will probably pass them over with a cursory glance; yet, if we except the Cartoons of Raphael, Hampton Court contains nothing so curious and valuable as this old frieze of Andrea Mantegna, which, notwithstanding the fragility of the material on which it is executed, has now existed for three hundred and eighty years, and, having been frequently engraved, is celebrated all over Europe.

Andrea retained through his whole life that taste for the forms and effects of sculpture which had given to all his earlier works a certain hardness, meagreness, and formality of outline, neither agreeable in itself nor in harmony with pictorial illusion; but in the Triumph of

Julius Cæsar the combination of a sculptural style with the aims and beauties of painting was not, as we usually find it, misplaced and unpleasing; it was fitted to the designed purpose and executed with wonderful success; the innumerable figures move one after another in a long and splendid procession, as in an ancient bas-relief, but coloured lightly, in a style resembling the antique paintings at Pompeii. Originally it appears that the nine compartments were separated from each other by sculptured pilasters. In the first picture, or compartment, we have the opening of the procession; trumpets, incense burning, standards borne aloft by the victorious soldiers. In the second picture we have the statues of the gods carried off from the temples of the enemy; battering-rams, implements of war, heaps of glittering armour carried on men's shoulders, or borne aloft in chariots. In the third picture, more splendid trophies of a similar kind; huge vases filled with gold coin, tripods, &c. In the fourth, more such trophies, with the oxen crowned with garlands for the sacrifice. In the fifth picture are four elephants adorned with rich garlands of fruits and flowers, bearing on their backs magnificent candelabra, and attended by beautiful youths. In the sixth are figures bearing vases, and others displaying the arms of the vanquished. The seventh picture shows us the unhappy captives, who, according to the barbarous Roman custom, were exhibited on these occasions to the scoffing and exulting populace: there is here a group of female captives of all ages, among them a young dejected bride-like figure, a woman carrying her infant children, and a mother leading by the hand

her little boy, who lifts up his foot as if he had hurt it; this group is particularly pointed out by Vasari, who praises it for its nature and its grace. In the eighth picture we have a group of singers and musicians, and among them is seen a youth whose unworthy office it was to mock at the wretched captives, in which he is assisted by a chorus of the common people; a beautiful youth with a tambourine is distinguished by singular spirit and grace. In the last picture appears the conqueror, Julius Cæsar, in a sumptuous chariot richly adorned with sculptures in the antique style. He is surrounded and followed by a crowd of figures, and among them is seen a youth bearing aloft a standard, on which is inscribed Cæsar's memorable words, *Veni*, *Vidi*, *Vici*—"I came, I saw, I conquered."

The inconceivable richness of fancy displayed in this triumphal procession, the numbers of figures and objects of every kind, the propriety of the antique costumes, ornaments, armour, &c., with the scientific manner in which the perspective is managed, the whole being adapted to its intended situation far above the eye, so that the under surfaces of the objects are alone visible (as would be the case when viewed from below), the upper surfaces vanishing into air; all these merits combined renders this series of pictures one of the grandest works of the fifteenth century, worthy of the attention and admiration of all beholders.

When the great Flemish painter, Rubens, was at Mantua in 1606, he was struck with astonishment on viewing these works, and made a fine copy in a reduced form of the fifth compartment: *copy*, however, it cannot

properly be called; it is rather a *version* in the manner of Rubens, the style of the whole, and even some of the circumstances, being altered. This fine picture is now in our National Gallery.*

Another of the most celebrated of Mantegna's works is the great picture now in the Louvre, at Paris, and called by the Italians "*la Madonna della Vittoria*," the Madonna of Victory. The occasion on which it was painted recalls a great event in history, the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. of France. Of all the wars undertaken by ambitious and unprincipled monarchs, whether instigated by revenge, by policy, or by rapacious thirst of dominion, this invasion of Italy, in 1495, was the most flagitious in its injustice, its folly, and its cruelty; it was also the most retributive in its results. Charles, after ravaging the whole country from the Alps to Calabria, found himself obliged to retreat, and on the banks of the Taro was met by Gian-Francesco, Marquis of Mantua, the son and successor of Frederigo, at the head of an army. On the part of the Italians it was

* Rubens made this copy for his own pleasure, and would never part with it: it was among the effects left at his death. There can be no doubt that the sojourn of Rubens at Mantua, previous to his visit to England in 1630, led to the acquisition of the Mantuan Gallery by Charles I., which was effected by the advice and agency of Rubens. After the death of Rubens, this copy was acquired by the Balbi family; and subsequently it was purchased by Mr. Rogers, and hung for many years in his drawing-room over the chimney-piece. For all these reasons, the acquisition of this beautiful and memorable picture by our National Gallery is a matter of congratulation.

In the British Museum there is a fine set of the woodcuts in chiaro-scuro, executed by Andrea Andreani about 1599, when the original frieze still kept its place in the palace at Mantua.

rather a victory missed than a victory won; for the French continued their retreat across the Alps, and the loss of the Italians was immense. The Marquis of Mantua, however, chose to consider it as a victory: he built a church on the occasion, and commanded Andrea Mantegna to paint a picture for the high altar, which should express at once his devotion and his gratitude. Considering the subject and the occasion, the French must have had a particular and malicious pleasure in placing this picture in the Louvre, where it now hangs.

It represents in the centre, under a canopy or arbour composed of garlands of foliage and fruit, and seated on a throne, the Virgin Mary, who holds on her knees the infant Saviour. On her right stand the archangel Michael and St. Maurice in complete armour. On the left are the patron saints of Mantua, St. Longinus and St. Andrew, with the infant St. John; more in front, on each side, are the Marquis of Mantua and his wife, the celebrated and accomplished Isabella d'Este, who, kneeling, return thanks for the so-called victory over the French. The figure of the Marchesa Isabella is still, in the French catalogue of the Louvre, styled St. Elizabeth, an error pointed out long since by Lanzi and others. This picture was finished in the year 1500, when Andrea was seventy; in beauty and softness of execution it exceeds all his other works, while in the poetical conception of the whole, the grandeur of the saints, and the expression in the countenance of Gonzaga as he gazes upwards in a transport of devotion, it is worthy of his best years. In the Louvre are three other pictures by Andrea Mantegna. One is the Crucifixion of our Savi-

our, a small picture remarkable for containing his own portrait in the figure of the soldier seen half-length in front. Another, an allegorical subject, represents the Vices flying before Wisdom, Chastity, and Philosophy, while Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance return from above, once more to take up their habitation among men. Another picture, of exceeding beauty, represents the Muses dancing to the sound of Apollo's lyre: Mars, Venus, and Cupid stand on a rocky height, looking upon them, while Vulcan is seen at a distance threatening his faithless consort. In this little picture Mantegna seems inspired by the very spirit of Greek art: the Muses are designed with exquisite taste and feeling; it is probably the chef-d'œuvre of the artist in his own particular style, that for which his natural turn of mind and early studies under Squarcione had fitted him. In general his religious pictures are not pleasing; and many of his classical subjects have a meagreness in the forms which is quite opposed to all our conceptions of beauty and greatness of style; but he has done grand things. We are so fortunate as to possess in our National Gallery, a genuine and celebrated picture by Andrea Mantegna, the Virgin and Child enthroned — the Divine Child standing on her knee, and blessing, while Mary Magdalene and St. John the Baptist stand on each side; the background is formed of orange-trees. The colouring is rather pale, and the expression of the Madonna rather weak, faults not usual with Andrea; in other respects — in the fine drawing, the character of the two saints, and the *pose* and drapery of the Virgin — it is as fine as possible. Besides the works already mentioned, there are

four pictures in the Museum at Berlin, and others at Vienna, Florence, and Naples.

Of many disciples formed by Andrea Mantegna not one attained to any fame or influence in his art; they all exaggerated his manner and defects, as is usual with scholars who follow the manner of their master. His two sons were both artists, studious and respectable men, but neither of them inherited the genius of their father. Ariosto, in a famous stanza of his great poem (Orlando Furioso, c. xxxiii., st. 2), in which he has commemorated all the leading painters of his own time, places the name of Andrea Mantegna between those of Lionardo da Vinci and Gian Bellini:—

"E quei che furo a nostri di, o son ora,
Lecnardo, Andrea Mantegna, Gian Bellino,
Duo Dossi, e quel, che a par sculpe, e colora
Michel piu che mortal Angel divino;
Bastiano, Raffael, Titian ch' honora
Non men Cador, che quei Venezia e Urbino;
E gli altri di cui tal opra si vede
Qual della prisca età si legge, e crede."

"Lo! Leonardo! Gian' Bellino view,
Two Dossi, and Mantegna reached by few;
With these an angel, Michael, styled divine,
In whom the sculptor and the painter join:
Sebastian, Titian, Raphael, three that grace
Cadora, Venice, and Urbino's race:
Each genius that can past events recall
In living figures on the storied wall."

The Invention of Engraving on Wood and Copper: 1423—1452.

Andrea Mantegna was not only eminent as a painter; he owed much of his celebrity and his influence over the artists of that age to the multiplication and diffusion of his designs by copper-plate engraving, an art unknown till his time: he was one of the first who practised it; certainly the first painter who engraved his own designs.

In these days, when we cannot walk through the streets even of a third-rate town without passing shops filled with engravings and prints, when not our books only but the newspapers that lie on our tables are illustrated; when the 'Penny Magazine' can place a little print after Mantegna at once before the eyes of fifty thousand readers;* when every beautiful work of art as it appears is multiplied and diffused by hundreds and thousands of copies; when the talk is rife of wondrous inventions by which such copies shall reproduce themselves to infinitude, without change or deterioration,† we find it difficult to throw our imagination back to a time when such things were not.

What printing did for literature, engraving on wood and copper has done for painting—not only diffused the designs and inventions of artists, which would otherwise be confined to one locality, but in many cases preserved those which would otherwise have perished altogether.

* This was written in 1845.

† Electrotyping and photography for instance.

It is interesting to remember that three inventions to which we owe such infinite instruction and delight were almost simultaneous. The earliest known impression of an engraving on wood is dated 1423; the earliest impression from an engraved metal plate was made about 1452; and the first printed book, properly so called, bears date, according to the best authorities, 1455.

Stamps for impressing signatures and characters on paper, in which the required forms were cut upon blocks of wood, we find in use in the earliest times. Seals for convents and societies, in which the distinctive devices or letters were cut hollow upon wood or metal, were known in the fourteenth century. The transition seems easy to the next application of the art; and thence perhaps it has happened that the name of the man who made this step is lost. All that is certainly known is, that the first wood-blocks for the purpose of pictorial representations were cut in Germany, in the province of Suabia; that the first use made of the art was for the multiplication of playing-cards, which about the year 1418 or 1420 were manufactured in great quantities at Augsburg, Nuremberg, and Venice; and that the next application of the art was devotional; it was used to multiply rude figures of saints, which were distributed among the common people. The earliest woodcut known is a coarse figure of St. Christopher, dated 1423. This curiosity exists in the library of Earl Spencer, at Althorpe.* Another impression, which is declared by connoisseurs to be a little later, is in the Royal Library

* A reduced imitation of this earliest known woodcut is annexed.

at Paris, where it is framed and hung up for the inspection of the curious. Rude, ill-drawn, grotesque—printed with some brownish fluid on the coarsest ill-coloured paper—still it is impossible to look at it without some of the curiosity, interest, and reverence with which we regard the first printed book, though it must be allowed that, in comparison with this first sorry specimen of a woodcut, the first *book* was a beautiful performance.

Up to a late period the origin of engraving on copper was involved in a like obscurity, and volumes of controversy have been written on the subject—some claiming the invention for Germany, others for Italy: at length, however, the indefatigable researches of antiquarians and connoisseurs, aided by the accidental discovery, in 1794, of the first impression from a metal plate, have set the matter at rest. If to Germany belongs the invention of engraving on wood, the art of copper-plate engraving was beyond all doubt first introduced and practised at Florence; yet here again the invention seems to have arisen out of a combination of accidental circumstances rather than to belong of right to one man. The circumstances, as well as we can trace them, were these:—

The goldsmiths of Italy, and particularly of Florence, were famous, in the fifteenth century, for working in *Niello*. They traced with a sharp point or graver on metal plates, generally of silver, all kinds of designs, sometimes only arabesques, sometimes single figures, sometimes elaborate and complicated designs from sacred and profane history. The lines thus cut or *scratched* were filled up with a black mass of sulphate of silver, so

that the design traced appeared very distinct contrasted with the white metal: in Italy the substance used in filling up the lines was called, from its black colour, in Latin *nigellum*, and in Italian *niello*. In this manner church plate, as chalices and reliquaries; also dagger-sheaths, sword-hilts, clasps, buttons, and many other small silver articles, were ornamented: those who practised the art were called *niellatori*.

According to Vasari's account, Maso Finiguerra was a skilful goldsmith, living in Florence; he became celebrated for the artistic beauty of his designs and workmanship in niello. Finiguerra is said to be the first to whom it accidentally occurred to try the effect of his work, and preserve a memorandum of his design, in the following manner:—Previous to filling up the engraved lines with the *niello*, which was a final process, he applied to them a black fluid easily removed, and then, laying a piece of damp paper on the plate or object, and pressing or rubbing it forcibly, the paper imbibed the fluid from the tracing, and presented a fac-simile of the design, which had the appearance of being drawn with a pen. That Finiguerra was the first or the only worker in *niello* who used this method of trying the effect of the work is more than doubtful; but it is certain that the earliest known impression of a niello plate is the impression from a pax* now existing in the Gallery of Bronzes at Florence, executed by Finiguerra, and representing the subject we have often alluded to—the Coronation of

* A pax or pix is the name given to the vessel in which the consecrated bread or wafer of the sacrament was deposited. This vessel was usually of the richest workmanship, often enriched with gems.

the Virgin by her Son the Redeemer, in presence of Saints and Angels; it contains nearly thirty minute figures most exquisitely designed. This relic is preserved in the Royal Library at Paris, where it was discovered lying among some old Italian engravings by the Abbé Zani. The date of the work is fixed beyond all dispute; for the record of the payment of sixty-six gold ducats (32*l.* sterling) to Maso Finiguerra for this identical pax still exists, dated 1452. The only existing impression from it must have been made previously, perhaps a few weeks or months before. It is now, like the first woodcut, framed and hung up in the Royal Library at Paris for the inspection of the curious: a reduced copy is given in the annexed illustration.

Another method of trying the effect of niello-work before it was quite completed was by taking the impression of the design, not on paper, but on sulphur, of which some curious and valuable specimens remain. After seeing several impressions of niello plates of the fifteenth century, we are no longer surprised to find skilful goldsmiths converted into excellent painters and sculptors.*

We have no evidence that it occurred to Maso Finiguerra, or any other niello-worker, to engrave designs on plates of copper for the express purpose of making and multiplying impressions of them on paper. The first who did this as a trade or profession was

* In our own time this art, after having been forgotten since the sixteenth century, when it fell into disuse, has been very successfully revived by Mr. Wagner, a goldsmith of Berlin, now residing at Paris.

Baccio Baldini, who, about 1467, employed several painters, particularly Sandro Botticelli and Filippino Lippi, to make designs for him to engrave. Andrea Mantegna caught up the idea with a kind of enthusiasm. he made the first experiment when about sixty, and, according to Lanzi, he engraved, during the sixteen remaining years of his life, not less than fifty plates: of these about thirty are now known to collectors, and considered genuine. Among them are his own designs for the Triumph of Julius Cæsar (the fifth, sixth, and seventh compartments only).

Familiar as we now are with all kinds of copperplate and wood-engraving, there are persons who do not understand clearly the difference between them. Independent of the difference of the material on which they are executed, the grand distinction between the two arts is this—that the copperplate engraver cuts out the lines by which the impression is produced, which are thus left hollow, and afterwards filled up with ink; the impression is produced by laying a piece of wet paper on the plate and passing them together under a heavy and perfectly even roller. The method of the engraver on wood is precisely the reverse. He cuts away all the surrounding surface of the block of wood, and leaves the lines which are to produce the impression prominent; they are afterwards blackened with ink like a stamp, and the impression taken with a common printing-press.

When Andrea Mantegna made his first essays in engraving on copper he does not seem to have used a press or roller; perhaps he was unacquainted with that

implement. At all events the early impressions of his plates have evidently been taken by merely laying the paper on the copper-plate and then rubbing it over with the hand; and they are very faint and spiritless compared with the later impressions taken with a press.

COMMENCEMENT OF

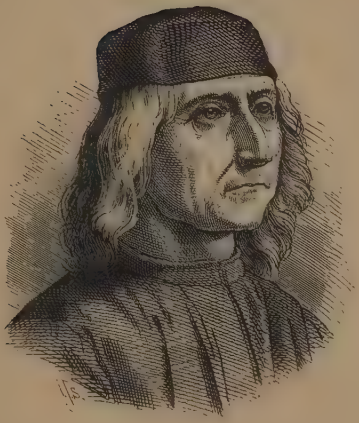
THE VENETIAN SCHOOL.

THE BELLINI.

A.D. 1421 TO A.D. 1516.

JACOPO BELLINI, the father, had studied painting under Gentile da Fabriano, of whom we have spoken as the scholar, or at least the imitator, of the famous monk Angelico da Fiesole. To express his gratitude and veneration for his instructor, Jacopo gave the name of Gentile to his eldest son: the second and most famous of the two was christened Giovanni (John); in the Venetian dialect *Gian Bellini.*

The sister of the Bellini being married to Andrea Mantegna, who exercised for forty years a sort of patriarchal authority over all the painters of northern Italy, it is singular that he should have had so little influence over his Venetian relatives. It is true the elder brother, Gentile, had always a certain leaning to Mantegna's school, and was fond of studying from a mutilated antique Venus which he kept in his studio. But the genius of his brother Gian Bellini was formed altogether



26.—Giovanni Bellini.

From a Portrait by himself, now in the Louvre.

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by other influences. The commercial intercourse between Venice and Germany brought several pictures and painters of Germany and the Netherlands into Venice. In the island of Murano, at Venice, dwelt a family called the Vivarini, who had carried on the art of painting from generation to generation, and who had associated with them some of the early Flemings: thus it was that the painters of the first Venetian school became familiarized with a style of colouring more rich and vivid than was practised in any other part of Italy: they were among the first who substituted oil-painting for distemper. To these advantages the elder Bellini added the knowledge of drawing and perspective taught in the Paduan school, and the religious and spiritual feeling which they derived from the example and instruction of Gentile da Fabriano. In these combined elements Gian Bellini was educated, and founded the Venetian school, afterwards so famous and so prolific in great artists.

The two brothers were first employed together in an immense work, which may be compared in its importance and its object to the decoration of our houses of parliament. They were commanded to paint the Hall of Council in the palace of the Doge with a series of pictures representing the principal events (partly legendary and fictitious, partly authentic) of the Venetian wars with the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa (1177); the combats and victories on the Adriatic, the reconciliation of the Emperor with Pope Alexander III. in the Place of St. Mark, when Frederic held the stirrup of the pope's mule; the Doge Ziani receiving from the pope

the gold ring with which he espoused the Adriatic in token of perpetual dominion over it; and other memorable scenes dear to the pride and patriotism of the Venetians.

These were painted in fourteen compartments round the hall. What remains to us of the works of the two brothers renders it a subject of lasting regret that these frescoes, and others still more valuable, were destroyed by fire in 1577.

In 1453 Constantinople was taken by the Turks, an event which threw the whole of Christendom into consternation, not unmixed with shame. The Venetians were the first to resume their commercial relations with the Levant; they sent an embassy to the Turkish Sultan to treat for the redemption of the Christian prisoners and negotiate a peace. This was happily concluded in 1454, under the auspices of the Doge, old Francesco Foscari.* It was on this occasion that the Sultan Mohammed II., having seen some Venetian pictures, desired that the Venetian government would send him one of their painters. The Council of Ten, after some deliberation, selected for this service GENTILE BELLINI, who took his departure accordingly in one of the state galleys, and on arriving at Constantinople was received with great honour. During his residence there he painted the portrait of the Sultan and one of his favourite sultanas; and he took an opportunity of presenting to the Sultan, as a token of homage from himself, a picture

* The story of the two Foscari is the subject of a tragedy by Lord Byron. The taking of Constantinople is the subject of one of the most beautiful tragedies of Joanna Baillie.

of the head of John the Baptist after decapitation. The Sultan admired it much, but criticised, with the air of a connoisseur, the appearance of the neck: he observed that the shrinking of the severed nerves was not properly expressed. As Gentile Bellini did not appear to feel the full force of this criticism, the Sultan called in one of his slaves, commanded the wretch to kneel down, and, drawing his sabre, cut off his head with a stroke, and thus gave the astonished and terrified painter a practical lesson in anatomy. It may be easily believed that after this horrible scene Gentile became uneasy till he had obtained leave of departure, and the Sultan at length dismissed him, with a letter of strong recommendation to his own government, a chain of gold, and other rich presents. After his return to Venice he painted some remarkable pictures; among them one representing St. Mark preaching at Alexandria, in which he has painted the men and women of Alexandria in rich Turkish costumes, such as he had seen at Constantinople. This curious picture is now in the Brera at Milan, and is engraved in Rosini's 'Storia della Pittura.' A portrait of Mohammed II., painted by Gentile Bellini, is in England, the property of A. H. Layard, Esq. All the early engravings of the grim Turkish conqueror which now exist are from the portraits painted by Bellini. He died in 1501, at the age of eighty.

A much more memorable artist in all respects was his brother Gian Bellini. His works are divided into two classes—those which he painted before he adopted the process of oil-painting, and those executed afterwards. The first have great sweetness and elegance and purity

of expression, with, however, a certain timidity and dryness of manner; in the latter we have a foretaste of the rich Venetian colouring, without any diminution of the grave simple dignity and melancholy sweetness of expression which distinguished his earlier works. Between his sixty-fifth and his eightieth year he painted those pictures which are considered as his chefs-d'œuvre, and which are now preserved in the churches at Venice and in the Gallery of the Academy of Arts in that city.

It has been said that Gian Bellini introduced himself disguised into the room of Antonello da Messina when he was painting at Venice, and stole from him the newly discovered secret of mixing the colours with oils instead of water. It is a consolation to think that this story does not rest on any evidence worthy of credit. Antonello had divulged his secret to several of his friends, particularly to Domenico Venezziano, afterwards murdered by Andrea Castagno. Besides, the character of Bellini renders it unlikely that he would have been guilty of such a perfidious trick.

Gian Bellini is said to have introduced at Venice the fashion of portrait-painting; before his time the likenesses of living persons had been frequently painted, but they were almost always introduced into pictures of large subjects: portraits properly so called were scarcely known till his time; then, and afterwards, every noble Venetian sat for his picture, generally the head only or half-length. Their houses were filled with family portraits, and it became a custom to have the effigies of their doges and those who distinguished themselves in he service of their country painted by order of the

state and hung in the ducal palace, where many of them are still to be seen. Up to the latest period of his life Gian Bellini had been employed in painting for his countrymen only religious pictures, or portraits, or subjects of Venetian history; the classical taste which had spread through all the states of Italy had not yet penetrated to Venice: but towards the end of his life, when nearly ninety, he was invited to Ferrara to paint in the palace of the duke a Dance of Bacchanals. On this occasion he made the acquaintance of Ariosto, who mentions him with honour among the painters of his time.

There is at the palace of Hampton Court a very curious little head of Bellini, certainly genuine, though much injured: it is inscribed underneath, *Johanes Bellini ipse*. We have in our National Gallery a most curious and genuine portrait of one of the old doges painted by Bellini. It is somewhat hard in the execution, but we cannot look at it without feeling that we could swear to the truth of the resemblance. In the Louvre at Paris are three pictures ascribed to Gian Bellini: one contains his own portrait and that of his brother Gentile, heads only; the former is dark, the latter fair; both wear a kind of cap or *beret*. Another, about six feet in length, represents the reception of a Venetian ambassador at Constantinople. A third is a Virgin and Child. The first-mentioned is by Gentile, and the two last uncertain. In the Berlin Museum are seven pictures by him, all considered genuine, and all are painted on panel and *in oils;* they belong therefore to his latest and best period.

Gian Bellini died in 1516. He had formed many disciples, and among them two whose glory in these later times has almost eclipsed that of their great teacher and precursor—GIORGIONE and TITIAN. Another, less famous, but of whom some beautiful pictures still exist at Venice, was Cima da Cornegliano.

27.—Pietro Vannucci, called Pietro Perugino.

By himself. From the Cambio di Perugia.

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THE UMBRIAN SCHOOL

PIETRO PERUGINO,

BORN 1446, DIED 1524;

AND

FRANCESCO FRANCIA.

For a long period the fame of Perugino, at least in this country, rested more on his having been the master and instructor of Raphael than on his own works or worth, but he is now better appreciated. He was a great and remarkable painter, popular in his own day and interesting in ours as the representative of a school of art immediately preceding that of Raphael. He was what the Italians call a "Capo-scuolo," and one of the most celebrated of all.

The territory of Umbria in Italy comprises that mountainous region of the Ecclesiastical States now called the Duchy of Spoleto. Urbino, Perugia, Foligno, Assisi, and Spoleto were among its principal towns; and the whole country, with its retired valleys and isolated cities, was distinguished in the middle ages as the peculiar seat of religious enthusiasm. It was here that

St. Francis of Assisi preached and prayed, and gathered around him his fervid self-denying votaries. Art, as usual, reflected the habits and feelings of the people, and here Gentile da Fabriano, the beloved friend of Angelico da Fiesole, exercised a particular influence. No less than thirteen or fourteen Umbrian painters, who flourished between the time of Gentile and that of Raphael, are mentioned in Passavant's 'Life of Raphael.' This mystical and spiritual direction of art extended itself to Bologna, and found a worthy interpreter in Francesco Francia. We shall, however, speak first of Perugino.

Pietro Vannucci was born at a little town in Umbria, called Città della Pieve, and he was known for the first thirty years of his life as Pietro della Pieve; after he had settled at Perugia, and had obtained there the rights of citizenship, he was called Pietro di Perugia, or IL PERUGINO, by which name he is best known.

We know little of the early life and education of Perugino; his parents were respectable, but poor. His first instructor is supposed to have been Niccolo Alunno. At this time (about 1470) Florence was considered as the head-quarters of art and artists; and the young painter, at the age of five-and-twenty, undertook a journey to Florence as the most certain path to excellence and fame.

Vasari, who is very unjust to Pietro in some respects, tells us that he was excited to industry by being constantly told of the great rewards and honours which the professors of painting had earned in ancient and in modern times, and also by the pressure of poverty, but

there can be no doubt that he added to genius and industry a more genuine sentiment of truth and beauty, a more real delight in his art, and a nobler ambition than Vasari gives him credit for, at least in his younger years. He left Perugia in a state of absolute want, and reached Florence, where he pursued his studies for many months with unwearied diligence, but so poor meanwhile that he had not even a bed to sleep on. He studied in the Brancacci chapel in the Carmine, which has been already mentioned; received some instruction in drawing and modelling from Andrea Verrocchio; and was a friend and fellow-pupil of Lionardo da Vinci. They are thus mentioned together in a contemporary poem written by Giovanni Santi, the father of the great Raphael:—

> "Due giovin par d' etate e par d' amori,
> Lionardo da Vinci e 'l Perusino
> Pier della Pieve, che son divin pittori."
>
> "Two youths, equal in years, equal in affection,
> Lionardo da Vinci and the Perugian
> Peter della Pieve, both divine painters."

When young in his art a pure and gentle feeling guided his pencil; and in the desire to learn, in the fixed determination to improve and to excel, his calm sense and his calculating spirit stood him in good stead. There was a famous convent near Florence,* in which the monks—not lazy nor ignorant, as monks are usually

* The convent of the *Gesuati* or *Jesuati*, who must not be confounded with the *Jesuiti*—the Jesuits. This noble convent, with most of its fine paintings, was destroyed when Clement VII. besieged Florence in 1529.

described—carried on several arts successfully, particularly the art of painting on glass. Perugino was employed to paint some frescoes in their convent, and also to make designs for the glass-painters: in return, he learned how to prepare and to apply many colours not yet in general use; and the lucid and vigorous tints to which his eye became accustomed in their workshop certainly influenced his style of colouring. He gradually rose in estimation; painted a vast number of pictures and frescoes for the churches and chapels of Florence, and particularly an altarpiece of great beauty for the famous convent of Vallombrosa. In this he represented the Assumption of the Virgin, who is soaring to heaven in the midst of a choir of angels, while the tutelary saints of the convent, St. Bernard Cardinale, St. John Gualberto, St. Benedict, and the Archangel Michael, standing below, look upwards with adoration and astonishment. This excellent picture is preserved in the Academy of the Fine Arts at Florence.* Ten years after Perugino had first entered Florence a poor nameless youth, he was called to Rome by Pope Sixtus IV. to assist with most of the distinguished painters of that time in painting the famous Sistine Chapel. All the frescoes of Perugino except two were afterwards effaced to make room for Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. Those which remain show that the style of Perugino at this time was decidedly Florentine, and quite distinct from his earlier and later works. They represent the Baptism of Christ in the river Jordan, and Christ delivering the Keys to

* It belongs, however, to a later period than his first sojourn at Florence in 1482, the date on the picture being 1500.

St. Peter. While at Rome he also painted a room in the palace of Prince Colonna. When he returned to Perugia he resumed the feeling and manner of his earlier years, combined with better drawing and colouring, and his best pictures were painted between 1490 and 1502; his principal work, however, was the hall of the *Collegio del Cambio* (*i. e.* Hall of Exchange) at Perugia, most richly and elaborately painted with frescoes, which still exist. The personages introduced exhibit a strange mixture of the sacred and profane: John the Baptist and other saints, Isaiah, Moses, Daniel, David, and other prophets, are figured on the walls with Fabius Maximus, Socrates, Pythagoras, Pericles, Horatius Cocles, and other Greek and Roman worthies. Other religious pictures painted in Perugia are remarkable for the simplicity, grace, and dignity of the Virgin, the infantine sweetness of the children and cherubs, and the earnest, ardent expression in the heads of his saints.

Perugino, in the very beginning of the sixteenth century, was certainly the most popular painter of his time; a circumstance which, considering that Raphael, Francia, and Lionardo da Vinci were all working at the same time, would surprise us did we not know that contemporary *popularity* is not generally the recompense of the most distinguished genius. We must remember that in 1505, when Raphael was a youth, Perugino was nearly sixty, and had in his long life painted many pictures in many different cities of Italy, having been employed at Rome, Florence, Sienna, Orvieto, Fano, as well as his own country of Perugia and its neighbourhood, which no doubt extended his name and popularity. He had also

opened a school or academy, which became celebrated for the number of admirable painters it produced. After 1505 his powers declined, though his fame and popularity remained. He undertook an immense number of works, and employed his scholars and assistants to execute them from his designs. A passion, of which perhaps the seeds were sown in his early days of poverty and misery, took possession of his soul. He was no longer excited to labour by a spirit of piety or the generous ambition to excel, but by an insatiable thirst for gain: all his late pictures, from the year 1505 to his death, betray the influence of this mean passion. He aimed at nothing beyond mechanical dexterity, and to earn his money with as little expense of time and trouble as possible; he became more and more feeble, mannered, and monotonous, continually repeating the same figures, actions, and heads, till his very admirers were wearied; and on his last visit to Florence, Michael Angelo, who had never done him justice, pronounced him, with contempt, "*Goffo nell' arte*," that is, a mere bungler; for which affront Pietro summoned him before the magistrates, but came off with little honour. He was no longer what he had been. Such was his love of money, or such his mistrust of his family, that when moving from place to place he carried his beloved gold with him; and being on one occasion robbed of a large sum, he fell ill, and was like to die of grief. It seems, however, hardly consistent with the mean and avaricious spirit imputed to him, that, having married a beautiful girl of Perugia, he took great delight in seeing her arrayed, at home and abroad, in the most costly gar-

ments, and sometimes dressed her with his own hands. To the reproach of avarice—too well founded—some writers have added that of irreligion: nay, two centuries after his death they showed the spot where he was buried in unconsecrated ground under a few trees, near Fontignano, he having refused to receive the last sacraments: this accusation has been refuted; and in truth there is such a divine beauty in some of the best pictures of Perugino, such exquisite purity and tenderness in his Madonnas, such an expression of enthusiastic faith and devotion in some of the heads, that it would be painful to believe that there was no corresponding feeling in his heart. In one or two of his pictures he has reached a degree of sublimity worthy of him who was the master of Raphael, but the instances are few.

In our National Gallery we have one of his most exquisite productions, an altarpiece painted for the Certosa at Pavia about 1501, and in which he is supposed to have been assisted by his pupil Raphael. In its original form this altarpiece consisted of six divisions or compartments—the three which we possess representing in the centre the *Madre Pia* (the Virgin Mary adoring her divine Son), with on one side the fine martial figure of St. Michael, "captain of the hosts of the Lord," and on the other the graceful and sympathising guardian angel, St. Raphael, leading his young charge Tobias. Of the three small half-length figures placed above, one remains in the Certosa and two are lost. Another little picture in the National Gallery (a Madonna and Child with St. John) is comparatively unimportant and feeble, and must have been

a very early picture, as it is painted in distemper, probably before his first visit to Florence.

In the Louvre at Paris there is a curious allegorical picture by Perugino, representing the Combat of Love and Chastity; many figures in a landscape. It seems a late production—feeble and tasteless; and the subject is precisely one least adapted to the painter's style and powers.

In almost every collection on the Continent there are works of Perugino, for he was so popular in his lifetime, that his pictures were as merchandise, and sold all over Italy.

Pietro Perugino died in 1524. He survived Raphael four years, and he may be said, during the last twenty-five years of his life, to have survived himself.

His scholars were very numerous, but the fame of all the rest is swallowed up in that of his great disciple RAPHAEL. Bernardino di Perugia, called PINTURICCHIO, was rather an assistant than a pupil: he has left some excellent and important works in the Ara Celi, the Vatican, and S. Maria del Popolo at Rome, in the famous series of the life of Pius II. at Sienna, and at Spello. He was a most elegant and graceful painter and a great friend of Raphael, though considerably older. We have now a fine work of Pinturicchio in our National Gallery; and by another scholar of Perugino, LO SPAGNA, we have a charming picture—the Madonna and Child glorified, with angels singing and playing.

28.—Bernardino Betti, called Pinturicchio.

From Vasari's History.

29.—Francesco Raibolini, called Francesco Francia.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

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FRANCESCO RAIBOLINI,

CALLED IL FRANCIA.

BORN 1450, DIED 1517.

THERE existed throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a succession of painters in Bologna, known in the history of Italian art as the *early* Bolognese school, to distinguish it from the *later* school, which the Carracci founded in the same city—a school altogether dissimilar in spirit and feeling. The chief characteristic of the former was the fervent piety and devotion of its professors. In the *sentiment* of their works they resembled the Umbrian school, but the *manner* of execution is different. One of these early painters, Lippo (or Filippo) di Dalmasio, was so celebrated for the beauty of his Madonnas, that he obtained the name of *Lippo dalle Madonne*. He greatly resembled the Frate Angelico in life and character, but was inferior as an artist. To his heads of the Virgin he gave an expression of saintly beauty, purity, and tenderness, which two hundred years later excited the admiration and emulation of Guido. Lippo died about 1409. Passing over some other names, we come to that of the greatest painter of the early Bologna school, FRANCESCO RAIBOLINI.

He was born in 1450; being just four years younger than his contemporary Perugino. Like many other painters of that age, already mentioned, he was educated for a goldsmith, and learned to design and model correctly. Francesco's master in the arts of working in gold and niello * was a certain Francia, whose name, in affectionate gratitude to his memory, he afterwards adopted, signed it on his pictures, and is better known by it than by his own family name. Up to the age of forty, Francesco Francia pursued his avocation of goldsmith, and became celebrated for the excellence of his workmanship in chasing gold and silver, and the exquisite beauty and taste of his niellos. He also excelled in engraving dies for coins and medals, and was appointed superintendent of the mint in his native city of Bologna, which office he held till his death.

We are not told how the attention of Francia was first directed to the art of painting. It is said that the sight of a beautiful picture by Perugino awakened the dormant talent; that he learned drawing from Marco Zoppo, one of the numerous pupils of Squarcione; and that for many months he entertained in his house certain artists who initiated him into the use of colours, &c. However this may be, his earliest picture is dated 1490, when he was in his fortieth year. It exists at present in the gallery at Bologna, and represents his favourite subject, so often repeated, a Madonna and Child, enthroned, and surrounded by saints and martyrs. This picture, which, if it be a first production, may well be termed wonderful

* For an account of the art of working in niello, and the invention to which it led, see p. 123.

as well as beautiful, excited so much admiration, that Giovanni Bentivoglio, then lord of Bologna, desired him to paint an altarpiece for his family chapel in the church of San Giacomo. This second essay of his powers excited in the strongest degree the enthusiasm of his fellow-citizens. The people of Bologna were distinguished among the other states of Italy for their patronage of native talent; they now exulted in having produced an artist who might vie with those of Florence, or Perugia, or Venice.

The vocation of Francia was henceforth determined: he abandoned his former employment of goldsmith and niello-worker, and became a painter by choice and by profession. During the next ten years he improved progressively in composition and in colour, still retaining the simple and beautiful sentiment which had from the first distinguished his works. His earliest pictures are in oil; but his success encouraged him to attempt fresco, and in this style, which required a grandeur of conception and a breadth and rapidity of execution for which his laborious and diminutive works in gold and niello could never have prepared his mind or hand, he appears to have succeeded at once. He was first employed by Bentivoglio to decorate one of the chambers in his palace with the story of Judith and Holofernes: and he afterwards executed in the chapel of St. Cecilia a series of frescoes from the legend of that saint. "The composition," says Kugler, "is extremely simple, without any superfluous figures: the action dramatic and well conceived. We have here the most noble figures, the most beautiful and graceful heads, a

pure taste in the drapery, and masterly backgrounds." It should seem that the merits here enumerated include all that constitutes perfection: unhappily these fine specimens of Francia's art are falling into ruin and decay.

The style of Francia at his best period is very distinct from that of Perugino, whom he resembles, however, so far as to show that the pictures of the latter were the first objects of his emulation and imitation. In the later works of Perugino there is a melancholy verging frequently on sourness and harshness, or fading into insipidity. Francia, in his richer and deeper colouring, his ampler forms, and the cheerful, hopeful, affectionate expression in his heads, reminds us of the Venetian school.

His celebrity in a short period had extended through the whole of Lombardy. Not only his native city, but Parma, Modena, Cesena, and Ferrara, were emulous to possess his works. Even Tuscany, so rich in painters of her own, had heard of Francia. The beautiful altarpiece which has enriched our National Gallery since the year 1841 was painted at the desire of a nobleman of Lucca.

This altarpiece is composed of two separate pictures. The larger compartment contains eight figures rather less than life. In the centre on a raised throne are seated the Virgin and her mother St. Anna. The Virgin is attired in a red tunic and a dark blue mantle which is drawn over the head. She holds in her lap the infant Christ, to whom St. Anna is presenting a peach. The expression of the Virgin is exceedingly pure, calm, and

saintly, yet without the seraph-like refinement which we see in some of Raphael's Madonnas: the head of the aged St. Anna is simply dignified and maternal. At the foot of the throne stands the little St. John, holding in his arms the cross of reeds and the scroll inscribed "Ecce Agnus Dei" (*Behold the Lamb of God!*). On each side of the throne are two saints. To the right of the Virgin stands St. Paul holding a sword, the instrument of his martyrdom; and St. Sebastian bound to a pillar and pierced with arrows: on the left, St. Lawrence with the emblematical gridiron and palm-branch; and St. Benedict, wearing the white habit of the reformed Benedictines. The heads of these saints want elevation of form, the brow in all being rather low and narrow; but the prevailing expression is simple, affectionate, devout, full of faith and hope. The background is formed of two open arches adorned with sculpture, the blue sky beyond; and lower down, between St. Paul and St. Sebastian, is seen a glimpse of a beautiful landscape. The draperies are grand and ample; the colouring rich and warm; the execution most finished in every part. On the cornice of the raised throne or pedestal is inscribed Francia aurifex Bononiensis P. (*i. e.* painted by Francia, goldsmith of Bologna), but no date. It measures six feet and a half high by six feet wide.

Over this square picture was placed the lunette, or arch, which is now separated from it. It represents the subject called in Italian a *Pietà* — the dead Redeemer supported on the knees of the Virgin mother. An angel clothed in green drapery supports the drooping head of the Saviour; another angel in red drapery kneels at his

feet. Grief in the face of the sorrowing mother—in the countenances of the angels reverential sorrow and pity —are most admirably expressed.

This altarpiece was painted by Francia about the year 1500, for the Marchesa Buonvisi of Lucca, and placed in the chapel of the Buonvisi family in the church of San Frediano. It remained there till lately purchased by the Duke of Lucca, who sent it with other pictures to be disposed of in England. The two pieces were valued at 4000*l.*; after some negotiation our government obtained them for the National Gallery at the price of 3500*l.**

The works of Francia were, until lately, confined to the churches of Bologna and other cities of Lombardy; now they are to be found in all the great collections of Europe. The Bologna Gallery contains six, the Berlin Museum three of his pictures.† In the Florentine Gallery is an admirable portrait of a man holding a letter in his hand. In the Imperial Gallery at Vienna there is a most exquisite altarpiece, the same size and style as the one in the National Gallery, but still more beautiful and poetical: the Virgin and Child are seated on the throne in the midst of a charming landscape; St. Francis standing on one side, and St. Catherine on the

* In the same church of San Frediano at Lucca, where this altarpiece was originally placed, there still exists (in 1858) a picture by Francia of astonishing beauty. It represents that curious subject, the Predestination of the Madonna, and not the *Assumption*, as it is styled in the last edition of Vasari, where, however, due praise is given to this wonderful picture—"*Opera veramente stupenda in ogni sua parte.*"—*Vide* Vasari, edit. Lemonnier, vi. 19.

† One of these (No. 253) is a repetition of the Pietà in our National Gallery.

other. The Gallery at Munich contains a picture by him, perhaps the most charming he ever painted: it represents a *Madre Pia*,—the infant Saviour lying on the grass amid roses and flowers, while the Virgin stands before him, looking down with clasped hands, in an ecstacy of love and devotion, on her divine Son: the figures are rather less than life.

It is pleasant to be assured that the life and character of Francia were in harmony with his genius. Vasari describes him as a man of comely aspect, of exemplary morals, of amiable and cheerful manners; in conversation so witty, so wise, and so agreeable, that in discourse with him the saddest man would have felt his melancholy dissipated, his cares forgotten; adding that he was loved and venerated not only by his family and fellow-citizens, but by strangers and the princes in whose service he was employed. A most interesting circumstance in the life of Francia was his friendship and correspondence with the youthful Raphael, who was thirty-four years younger than himself. There is extant a letter which Raphael addressed to Francia in the year 1508. In this letter, which is expressed with exceeding kindness and deference, Raphael excuses himself for not having painted his own portrait for his friend, and promises to send it soon; he presents him with his design for the Nativity, and requests to have in return Francia's design for the Judith,* to be placed among his most precious treasures; he alludes, but discreetly, to the grief which Francia must have felt when

* This drawing is said to exist in the collection of the Archduke Charles, at Vienna.—See Passavant.

his patron Bentivoglio was exiled from Bologna by Pope Julius II.; and he concludes affectionately, "continue to love me as I love you, with all my heart." Raphael afterwards, according to his promise, sent his portrait to his friend, and Francia addressed to him a very pretty sonnet, in which he styles him, as if prophetically, the "painter above all painters:"

"Tu solo il Pittor sei de' Pittori."

About the year 1516 Raphael sent to Bologna his famous picture of the St. Cecilia surrounded by other Saints, which had been commanded by a lady of the house of Bentivoglio, to decorate the church of St. Cecilia, the same church in which Francia had painted the frescoes already mentioned. Raphael, in a modest and affectionate letter, recommended the picture to the care of his friend Francia, entreating him to be present when the case was opened, to repair any injury it might have received in the carriage, and to correct anything which seemed to him faulty in the execution. Francia zealously fulfilled his wishes: and when he beheld this masterpiece of the divinest of painters, burst into transports of admiration and delight, placing it far above all that he had himself accomplished. As he died a short time afterwards, it was said that he had sickened of envy and despair on seeing himself thus excelled, and, in his native city, his best works eclipsed by a young rival. Vasari tells this story as a tradition of his own time; his expression is "*come alcuni credono*" (as some believe); but it rests on no other evidence, and is so contrary to all we know of the gentle and generous spirit of Francia,

and so inconsistent with the sentiments which for many years he had cherished and avowed for Raphael, that we may set it aside as unworthy of all belief. The date of Francia's death has been a matter of dispute, but it appears certain, from state documents lately discovered at Bologna, that he died Master of the Mint in that city, on the 6th of January, 1518, being then in his sixty-eighth year. His son Giacomo became an esteemed painter in his father's style: in the Berlin Gallery there are six pictures by his hand; and one by Giulio Francia, a cousin and pupil of the elder Francia.

FRA BARTOLOMEO,

Called also BACCIO DELLA PORTA and IL FRATE.

Born 1469, died 1517.

Before we enter on the golden age of painting—that splendid æra which crowded into a brief quarter of a century (between 1505 and 1530) the greatest names and most consummate productions of the art—we must speak of one more painter justly celebrated. Perugino and Francia, of whom we have spoken at length, and Fra Bartolomeo, of whom we are now to speak, were still living at this period; but they belonged to a previous age, and were informed by a wholly different spirit. They contributed in some degree to the perfection of their great contemporaries and successors, but they owed the sentiment which inspired their own works to influences quite distinct from those which prevailed during the next half-century. The last of these older painters of the first Italian school was Fra Bartolomeo.

He was born in the little town of Savignano, in the territory of Prato, near Florence. Of his family little is known, and of his younger years nothing, but that, having shown a disposition to the art of design, he was placed under the tuition of Cosimo Roselli (of whom I

30.—Fra Bartolomeo della Porta di San Marco, called Il Frate.

By Himself.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

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have already spoken); and that while receiving his instructions he resided with some relations who dwelt near one of the gates of the city (la Porta San Piero). Hence for the first thirty years of his life he was known among his companions by the name of Baccio della Porta; Baccio being the Tuscan diminutive of Bartolomeo. While studying in the *atelier* of Cosimo Roselli, Baccio formed a friendship with Mariotto Albertinelli, a young painter about his own age. It was on both sides an attachment almost fraternal. They painted together, sometimes on the same picture, and in style and sentiment were so similar that it has become difficult to distinguish their works. Baccio was, however, more particularly distinguished by his feeling for softness and harmony of colour, and the tender and devout expression of his religious pictures. From his earliest years he appears to have been a religious enthusiast, and this turn of mind not only characterised all the productions of his pencil, but involved him in a singular manner with some of the most remarkable events and characters of his time.

Lorenzo de' Medici, called Lorenzo the Magnificent, was then master of the liberties of Florence. The revival of classical learning, the study of the antique sculptures (diffused, as we have related, by the school of Padua, and rendered still more a fashion by the influence and popularity of Andrea Mantegna, already old, and Michael Angelo, then a young man), was rapidly corrupting the simple and pious taste which had hitherto prevailed in art, even while imparting to it a more universal direction, and a finer feeling for

beauty and sublimity in the abstract. At the same time, and encouraged for their own purposes by the Medici family, there prevailed with this pagan taste in literature and art a general laxity of morals, a licence of conduct, and a disregard of all sacred things, such as had never, even in the darkest ages of barbarism, been known in Italy. The papal chair was during that period filled by two popes, the perfidious and cruel Sixtus IV., and the yet more detestable Alexander VI. (the infamous Borgia). Florence, meantime, under the sway of Lorenzo and his sons, became one of the most magnificent, but also one of the most dissolute of cities.

The natural taste and character of Bartolomeo placed him far from this luxurious and licentious court; but he had acquired great reputation by the exquisite beauty and tenderness of his Madonnas, and he was employed by the Dominicans of the convent of St. Mark to paint a fresco in their church, representing the Last Judgment. At this time Savonarola, an eloquent friar in the convent, was preaching against the disorders of the times, the luxury of the nobles, the usurpation of the Medici, and the vices of the popes, with a fearless fervour and eloquence which his hearers and himself mistook for direct inspiration from heaven. The influence of this extraordinary man increased daily; and among his most devoted admirers and disciples was Bartolomeo. In a fit of perplexity and remorse, caused by an eloquent sermon of Savonarola, he joined with many others in making a sacrifice of all the books and pictures which related to heathen poetry and art on which they could lay their hands; into this funeral pyre, which was

kindled in sight of the people in one of the principal streets of Florence, Bartolomeo flung all those of his designs, drawings, and studies which represented either profane subjects or the human figure undraped, and he almost wholly abandoned the practice of his art for the society of his friend and spiritual pastor. But the talents, the enthusiasm, the popularity of Savonarola had marked him for destruction. He was excommunicated by the pope for heresy, denounced by the Medici, and at length forsaken by the fickle people who had followed, obeyed, almost adored him as a saint. Bartolomeo happened to be lodged in the convent of St. Mark when it was attacked by the rabble and a party of nobles. The partisans of Savonarola were massacred, and Savonarola himself carried off to torture and to death. Our pious and excellent painter was not remarkable for courage. Terrified by the tumult and horrors around him, he hid himself, vowing, if he escaped the danger, to dedicate himself to a religious life. Within a few weeks the unhappy Savonarola, after suffering the torture, was publicly burned in the Grand Piazza of Florence; and Bartolomeo, struck with horror at the fate of his friend—a horror which seemed to paralyse all his faculties—took the vows and became a friar in the Dominican convent of San Marco, leaving to his friend Albertinelli the task of completing those of his frescoes and pictures which were left unfinished.

He passed the next four years of his life without touching a pencil, in the austere seclusion of his convent. At the end of this period the entreaties and commands of his Superior induced Bartolomeo to resume the

practice of his art, and from this time he is known as Fra Bartolomeo di San Marco, and by many writers he is styled simply Il Frate (*the Friar*); in Italy he is scarcely known by any other designation.

Timid by nature, and tormented by religious scruples, he at first returned to his easel with languor and reluctance; but an incident occurred which re-awakened all his genius and enthusiasm. Young Raphael, then in his twenty-first year, and already celebrated, arrived in Florence. He visited the Frate in his cell, and between these kindred spirits a friendship ensued which ended only with death, and to which we partly owe the finest works of both. Raphael, who was a perfect master of perspective, instructed his friend in the more complicated rules of the science, and Fra Bartolomeo in return initiated Raphael into some of his methods of colouring.

It was not, however, in the merely mechanical processes of art that these two great painters owed most to each other. It is evident, on examining his works, that Fra Bartolomeo's greatest improvement dates from his acquaintance with Raphael; that his pictures from this time display more energy of expression—a more intellectual grace; while Raphael imitated his friend in the softer blending of his colours, and learned from him the art of arranging draperies in an ampler and nobler style than he had hitherto practised; in fact, he had just at this time caught the sentiment and manner of Bartolomeo so completely, that the only great work he executed at Florence (the Madonna del Baldachino in the Palazzo Pitti) might be at the first glance mistaken for a com-

position of the Frate. Richardson, an excellent writer and first-rate authority, observes that "at this time Fra Bartolomeo seems to have been the greater man, and might have been *the* Raphael, had not Fortune been determined in favour of the other." It is not, however, Fortune alone which determines these things; and of Raphael we might say, as Constance said of her son, that "at his birth Nature and Fortune joined to make him great." But this is digressing, and we must now return to the personal history of the Frate.

About the year 1513 Bartolomeo obtained leave of the Superior of his convent to visit Rome. He had heard so much of the grand works on which Raphael and Michael Angelo were employed by Leo X., that he could no longer repress the wish to behold and judge with his own eyes these wonderful productions. He was also engaged to paint in the church of St. Sylvester on Monte Cavallo: but the air of Rome did not agree with him. He indeed renewed his friendship with Raphael, and they spent many hours and days in each other's society; but Raphael had by this time so far outrun him in every kind of excellence, and what he saw around him in the Vatican and in the Sistine Chapel so far surpassed his previous conceptions, that admiration and astonishment seemed to swallow up the feeling of emulation. There was no envy in his gentle and pious mind, but he could not paint, he could not apply himself; a cloud fell upon his spirits, which was attributed partly to indisposition; and he returned to Florence, leaving at Rome only two unfinished pictures, figures of St. Peter and St. Paul, which Raphael under-

took to finish for him, and, in the midst of his own great and multifarious works, found time to complete. It is said that while Raphael was painting on the head of St. Peter, two of his friends, who were cardinals, and not remarkable for the sanctity of their lives, stood conversing with him, and thought either to compliment him, or perhaps rouse him to contradiction, by criticising the work of Bartolomeo: one of them observed that the colouring was much *too red*. To which Raphael replied with that graceful gaiety which blunts the edge of a sarcasm, "May it please your Eminences, the holy apostle here represented is blushing in heaven, as he certainly would do were he now present, to behold the Church he founded on earth governed by such as you!"

On returning to Florence, Fra Bartolomeo resumed his pencil, and showed that his journey to Rome had not been in vain. The St. Mark, now in the Pitti Palace, and the famous Madonna di Misericordia at Lucca, were executed after his return. Every picture subsequently painted displayed increasing vigour, and he was still in the full possession of his powers when he was seized with a fever and dysentery, caused, it is said, by eating too many figs, and died in his convent October 8, 1517, being then in his forty-eighth year.

The personal character of Fra Bartolomeo is impressed on all his works. He was deficient, as we have seen, in physical courage and energy; but, in his disposition, enthusiastic, devout, and affectionate. Tenderness and a soft regular beauty characterise his female heads; his saints have a mild and serious dignity. He is very seldom grand or sublime in conception, or energetic in

movement and expression; the pervading sentiment in all his best pictures is *holiness*. He particularly excelled in the figures of boy-angels, which he introduced into most of his groups, sometimes playing on musical instruments, seated at the feet of the Virgin, or bearing a canopy over her head, but, however employed, always full of infantine grace and candour. He is also famed for the rich architecture he introduced into his pictures, and for the grand and flowing style of his draperies. It was his opinion that every object should be painted, if possible, from nature; and for the better study and arrangement of the drapery, he invented those wooden figures with joints (called lay-figures) which are now to be found in the studio of every painter, and which have been of incalculable service in art.

We have not, as yet, any picture by Fra Bartolomeo in our National Gallery. Lucca, Florence, and Vienna possess the three finest.

The first of these, at Lucca, is perhaps the most important of all his works. It is called the Madonna della Misericordia, and represents the Virgin, a grand and beautiful figure, standing on a raised platform with outstretched arms: beneath her ample robe, which is held open by two angels, are groups of suppliants, who look up to her as *she* looks up to heaven, where, hovering in a glory of light, is seen her divine Son. Wilkie, in one of his letters from Italy (1827), dwells upon the beauty of this noble picture, and says that it combines the merits of Raphael, of Titian, of Rembrandt, and of Rubens! "Here," he says, "a monk in the retirement of his cloister, shut out from the taunts and criticism of

the world, seems to have anticipated in his early time all that his art could arrive at in its most advanced maturity; and this he has been able to do without the usual blandishments of the more recent periods, and with all the higher qualities peculiar to the age in which he lived." *

This is very high praise, particularly from such a man as Wilkie. The mere outline engraving in Rosini's 'Storia della Pittura' will show the beauty of the composition; and the testimony of Wilkie with regard to the magical colouring is sufficient.

The St. Mark in the Pitti Palace is a single figure, seated, and holding his Gospel in his hand. For this picture a grand-duke of Tuscany (Ferdinand II.) paid 1200*l.* nearly two hundred years ago, which, according to the present value of money, would be equal to about 3000*l.* Much finer, though less celebrated than the figure of St. Mark, is a Deposition from the Cross, also in the Pitti Palace, in which the Virgin gazing on the face of her dead Son, and the Magdalene bowed down with anguish over his feet, are remarkable for depth of pathetic expression.

In the Imperial Gallery at Vienna is the Presentation in the Temple, a picture of wonderful dignity and beauty, and well known by the fine engravings which exist of it. The figures are rather less than life.

In the Louvre at Paris are two very fine pictures; a Madonna enthroned, with several figures, life size,

* Life of Sir David Wilkie, vol. ii. p. 451.

which was painted as an altarpiece for his own convent of St. Mark, and afterwards sent as a present to Francis I.; the other is an Annunciation.

In the Gallery of Lord Westminster there is a divine little picture, in which the infant Christ is represented reclining on the lap of the Virgin, and holding the cross, which the young St. John, stretching forth his arms, appears anxious to take from him.

The Berlin Gallery contains only one of his pictures; the Dresden Gallery not one. His works are best studied at Lucca and in his native city of Florence, to which they are chiefly confined.

Fra Bartolomeo had several scholars, none of whom were distinguished except a nun of the monastery of St. Catherine, known as Suor Plautilla, who imitated his style, and has left some beautiful pictures.

LIONARDO DA VINCI.

BORN 1452, DIED 1519.

WE now approach the period when the art of painting reached its highest perfection, whether considered with reference to poetry of conception, or the mechanical means through which these conceptions were embodied in the noblest forms. Within a short period of about thirty years, *i. e.* between 1490 and 1520, the greatest painters whom the world has yet seen were living and working together. On looking back we cannot but feel that the excellence they attained was the result of the efforts and aspirations of a preceding age; and yet these men were so great in their vocation, and so individual in their greatness, that, losing sight of the linked chain of progress, they seemed at first to have had no precursors, as they have since had no peers. Though living at the same time, and most of them in personal relation with each other, the direction of each mind was different—was peculiar; though exercising in some sort a reciprocal influence, this influence never interfered with the most decided originality. These wonderful artists, who would have been remarkable men in their time though they had never touched a pencil, were Lionardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio,

31.—Lionardo da Vinci.

From a Portrait by himself, at Florence.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

Page 162.

Giorgione, Titian, in Italy; and in Germany, Albert Durer. Of these men we might say, as of Homer and Shakspere, that they belong to no particular age or country, but to all time, and to the universe. That they flourished together within one brief and brilliant period, and that each carried out to the highest degree of perfection his own peculiar aims, was no casualty: nor are we to seek for the causes of this surpassing excellence merely in the history of the art as such. The causes lay far deeper, and must be referred to the history of human culture. The fermenting activity of the fifteenth century found its results in the extraordinary development of human intelligence in the commencement of the sixteenth century. We often hear in these days of "the spirit of the age;" but in that wonderful age three mighty spirits were stirring society to its depths:—the spirit of bold investigation into truths of all kinds, which led to the Reformation; the spirit of daring adventure, which led men in search of new worlds beyond the eastern and the western oceans; and the spirit of art, through which men soared even to the "seventh heaven of invention."

Lionardo da Vinci seems to present in his own person a *résumé* of all the characteristics of the age in which he lived. He was *the* miracle of that age of miracles. Ardent and versatile as youth; patient and persevering as age; a most profound and original thinker; the greatest mathematician and most ingenious mechanic of his time; architect, chemist, engineer, musician, poet, painter!—we are not only astounded by the variety of his natural gifts and acquired knowledge, but by the

practical direction of his amazing powers.* The extracts which have been published from MSS. now existing in his own handwriting show him to have anticipated by the force of his own intellect some of the greatest discoveries made since his time. These fragments, says Mr. Hallam,† "are, according to our common estimate of the age in which he lived, more like revelations of physical truths vouchsafed to a single mind, than the superstructure of its reasoning upon any established basis. The discoveries which made Galileo, Kepler, Castelli, and other names illustrious—the system of Copernicus—the very theories of recent geologists, are anticipated by Da Vinci within the compass of a few pages, not perhaps in the most precise language, or on the most conclusive reasoning, but so as to strike us with something like the awe of preternatural knowledge. In an age of so much dogmatism he first laid down the grand principle of Bacon, that experiment and observation must be the guides to just theory in the investigation of nature. If any doubt could be harboured, not as to the right of Lionardo da Vinci to stand as the first name of the fifteenth century, which is beyond all doubt,‡ but as to his originality in so many discoveries, which probably no one man, especially in such cir-

* The Italian writers thus sum up the qualifications of Lionardo with an array of discriminative epithets not easily translated :— "*Valente* musico e poeta; *ingegnoso* mecanico; *profondo* geometra e matematico; *egregio* architetto; *esimio* idraulico; *eccelente* plasticatore e *sommo* pittore."

† 'History of the Literature of Europe.'

‡ When we think of Lionardo's contemporary, Columbus, we feel inclined, if not to dispute this fiat of the great historian, at least to ponder on it, and those ponderings lead us far.

cumstances, has ever made—it must be by an hypothesis not very untenable, that some parts of physical science had already attained a height which mere books do not record."

It seems at first sight almost incomprehensible that, thus endowed as a philosopher, mechanic, inventor, discoverer, the fame of Lionardo should now rest on the works he has left as a painter. We cannot, within these limits, attempt to explain why and how it is that as the man of science he has been naturally and necessarily left behind by the onward march of intellectual progress, while as the poet-painter he still survives as a presence and a power. We must proceed at once to give some account of him in the character in which he exists to us and for us—that of the great artist.

Lionardo was born at Vinci, near Florence, in the Lower Val d'Arno, on the borders of the territory of Pistoia. His father, Piero da Vinci, was an advocate of Florence—not rich, but in independent circumstances, and possessed of estates in land. The singular talents of his son induced Piero to give him, from an early age, the advantage of the best instructors. As a child, he distinguished himself by his proficiency in arithmetic and mathematics. Music he studied early, as a science as well as an art. He invented a species of lyre for himself, and sung his own poetical compositions to his own music—both being frequently extemporaneous. But his favourite pursuit was the art of design in all its branches; he modelled in clay or wax, or attempted to draw every object which struck his fancy. His father sent him to study under Andrea Verrocchio (of whom

we have already given some account), famous as a sculptor, chaser in metal, and painter. Andrea, who was an excellent and correct designer, but a bad and hard colourist, was soon after engaged to paint a picture of the Baptism of our Saviour. He employed Lionardo, then a youth, to execute one of the angels: this he did with so much softness and richness of colour, that it far surpassed the rest of the picture; and Verrocchio from that time threw away his palette, and confined himself wholly to his works in sculpture and design; "enraged," says Vasari, "that a child should thus excel him."*

The youth of Lionardo thus passed away in the pursuit of science and of art: sometimes he was deeply engaged in astronomical calculations and investigations; sometimes ardent in the study of natural history, botany, and anatomy; sometimes intent on new effects of colour, light, shadow, or expression, in representing objects animate or inanimate. Versatile, yet persevering, he varied his pursuits, but he never abandoned any. He was quite a young man when he conceived and demonstrated the practicability of two magnificent projects: one was, to lift the whole of the church of San Lorenzo, by means of immense levers, some feet higher than it now stands, and thus supply the deficient elevation;† the other project was, to form the Arno into a navigable

* This picture is now preserved in the Academy at Florence. The first angel on the right is that which was painted by Lionardo.

† Wild as this project must have appeared, it was not perhaps impossible. In our days the Sunderland lighthouse was lifted from its foundations, and removed to a distance of several yards.

canal as far as Pisa, which would have added greatly to the commercial advantages of Florence.*

It happened about this time that a peasant on the estate of Piero da Vinci brought him a circular piece of wood, cut horizontally from the trunk of a very large old fig-tree, which had been lately felled, and begged to have something painted on it as an ornament for his cottage. The man being an especial favourite, Piero desired his son Lionardo to gratify his request; and Lionardo, inspired by that wildness of fancy which was one of his characteristics, took the panel into his own room, and resolved to astonish his father by a most unlooked-for proof of his art. He determined to compose something which should have an effect similar to that of the Medusa on the shield of Perseus, and almost petrify beholders. Aided by his recent studies in natural history, he collected together from the neighbouring swamps and the river-mud all kinds of hideous reptiles, as adders, lizards, toads, serpents—insects, as moths, locusts—and other crawling and flying obscene and obnoxious things; and out of these he composed a sort of monster or chimera, which he represented as about to issue from the shield, with eyes flashing fire, and of an aspect so fearful and abominable that it seemed to infect the very air around. When finished, he led his father into the room in which it was placed, and the terror and horror of Piero proved the success of his attempt. This production, afterwards known as the *Rotello del Fico*,† from the material on which it was

* This project was carried into execution 200 years later.

† *Rotello* means a shield or buckler; *Fico*, a fig-tree.

painted, was sold by Piero secretly for one hundred ducats to a merchant, who carried it to Milan, and sold it to the duke for three hundred. To the poor peasant thus cheated of his Rotello Piero gave a wooden shield, on which was painted a heart transfixed by a dart; a device better suited to his taste and comprehension. In the subsequent troubles of Milan, Lionardo's picture disappeared, and was probably destroyed as an object of horror by those who did not understand its value as a work of art.

The anomalous monster represented on the Rotello was wholly different from the Medusa, afterwards painted by Lionardo, and now existing in the Florence Gallery. This represents the severed head of Medusa, seen foreshortened, lying on a fragment of rock: the features are beautiful and regular; the hair already metamorphosed into serpents—

> "which curl and flow,
> And their long tangles in each other lock,
> And with unending involutions show
> Their mailed radiance."

Those who have once seen this terrible and fascinating picture can never forget it. The ghastly head seems to expire, and the serpents to crawl into glittering life, as we look upon it.

During this first period of his life, which was wholly passed in Florence and its neighbourhood, Lionardo painted several other pictures of a very different character, and designed some beautiful cartoons of sacred and mythological subjects, which showed that his sense of the beautiful, the elevated, and the graceful, was not

less a part of his mind than that eccentricity and almost perversion of fancy which made him delight in sketching ugly, exaggerated caricatures, and representing the deformed and the terrible.

Lionardo da Vinci was now about thirty years old, in the prime of his life and talents. His taste for pleasure and expense was, however, equal to his genius and indefatigable industry; and anxious to secure a certain provision for the future, as well as a wider field for the exercise of his various talents, he accepted the invitation of Ludovico Sforza il Moro, then regent, afterwards Duke of Milan, to reside in his court, and to execute a colossal equestrian statue of his ancestor Francesco Sforza. Here begins the second period of his artistic career, which includes his sojourn at Milan, that is, from 1483 to 1499.

Vasari says that Lionardo was invited to the court of Milan for the Duke Ludovico's amusement, "as a musician and performer on the lyre, and as the greatest singer and *improvisatore* of his time;" but this is improbable. Lionardo, in his long letter to that prince, in which he recites his own qualifications for employment, dwells chiefly on his skill in engineering and fortification; and sums up his pretensions as an artist in these few brief words:—"I understand the different modes of sculpture in marble, bronze, and terra-cotta. In painting, also, I may esteem myself equal to any one, let him be who he may." Of his musical talents he makes no mention whatever, though undoubtedly these, as well as his other social accomplishments, his handsome person, his winning address, his wit and

eloquence, recommended him to the notice of the prince, by whom he was greatly beloved, and in whose service he remained for about seventeen years. It is not necessary, nor would it be possible here, to give a particular account of all the works in which Lionardo was engaged for his patron,* nor of the great political events in which he was involved, more by his position than by his inclination; for instance, the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. of France, and the subsequent invasion of Milan by Louis XII., which ended in the destruction of the Duke Ludovico. The greatest work of all, and by far the grandest picture which, up to that time, had been executed in Italy, was the Last Supper, painted on the wall of the refectory, or dining-room, of the Dominican convent of the Madonna delle Grazie. It occupied Lionardo about two years, from 1496 to 1498.

The moment selected by the painter is described in the 26th chapter of St. Matthew, 21st and 22nd verses: "And as they did eat, he said, Verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me: and they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?" The knowledge of character displayed in the heads of the different apostles is even more wonderful than the skilful arrangement of the figures and the amazing beauty of the workmanship. The space occupied by the picture is a wall 28 feet in length, and the figures are larger than life.

Of this magnificent creation of art only the moulder-

* Of these, the canal of the Martesana, as well from its utility as from the difficulties he surmounted in its execution, would have been sufficient to immortalize him.

ing remains are now visible. It has been so often repaired, that almost every vestige of the original painting is annihilated; but from the multiplicity of descriptions, engravings, and copies that exist, no picture is more universally known and celebrated. Perhaps the best judgment we can now form of its merits is from the fine copy executed by one of Lionardo's best pupils, Marco Uggione, for the Certosa at Pavia, and now in London, in the collection of the Royal Academy. Eleven other copies, by various pupils of Lionardo, painted either during his lifetime or within a few years after his death, while the picture was in perfect preservation, exist in different churches and collections.

While engaged on the Cenacolo, Lionardo painted the portrait of Lucrezia Crivelli, now in the Louvre (No. 483). It has been engraved under the title of *La Belle Ferronière*, but later researches leave no doubt that it represents Lucrezia Crivelli, a beautiful favourite of Ludovico Sforza, and was painted at Milan in 1497. It is, as a work of art, of such extraordinary perfection that all critical admiration is lost in wonder.

Of the grand equestrian statue of Francesco Sforza, Lionardo never finished more than the model in clay, which was considered a masterpiece. Some years afterwards (in 1499), when Milan was invaded by the French, it was used as a target by the Gascon bowmen, and completely destroyed. The profound anatomical studies which Lionardo made for this work still exist.

In the year 1500, the French being in possession of Milan, his patron Ludovico in captivity, and the affairs of the state in utter confusion, Lionardo returned to his

native Florence, where he hoped to re-establish his broken fortunes, and to find employment. Here begins the third period of his artistic life, from 1500 to 1513, that is, from his forty-eighth to his sixtieth year. He found the Medici family in exile, but was received by Pietro Soderini (who governed the city as "*Gonfaloniere perpetuo*") with great distinction, and a pension was assigned to him as painter in the service of the republic. One of his first works after his return to Florence was the famous portrait of Madonna Lisa del Giocondo, called in French *La Joconde*, and now in the Louvre (484), which after the death of Lionardo was purchased by Francis I. for 4000 gold crowns, equal to 45,000 francs or 1800*l.*, an enormous sum in those days, yet who ever thought it too much?

Then began the rivalry between Lionardo and Michael Angelo, which lasted during the remainder of Lionardo's life. The difference of age (for Michael Angelo was twenty-two years younger) ought to have prevented all unseemly jealousy: but Michael Angelo was haughty, and impatient of all superiority, or even equality; Lionardo, sensitive, capricious, and naturally disinclined to admit the pretensions of a rival, to whom he could say, and *did* say, "I was famous before you were born!" With all their admiration of each other's genius, their mutual frailties prevented any real good-will on either side. The two painters competed for the honour of painting in fresco one side of the great Council-hall in the Palazzo Vecchio at Florence. It *was* to have been adorned with the great deeds of the Florentine republic, by two of the greatest men that republic had ever pro-

duced. We now see it covered with the ostentatious misdeeds of the tyrant Cosmo, executed by the servile painters of the sixteenth century. Each prepared his cartoon; each, emulous of the fame and conscious of the abilities of his rival, threw all his best powers into his work. Lionardo chose for his subject the Defeat of the Milanese general Niccolò Piccinino by the Florentine army in 1440. One of the finest groups represented a combat of cavalry disputing the possession of a standard. "It was so wonderfully executed, that the horses themselves seemed animated by the same fury as their riders; nor is it possible to describe the variety of attitudes, the splendour of the dresses and armour of the warriors, nor the incredible skill displayed in the forms and actions of the horses."

Michael Angelo chose for his subject the moment before the same battle, when a party of Florentine soldiers bathing in the Arno are surprised by the sound of the trumpet calling them to arms. Of this cartoon we shall have more to say in treating of his life. The preference was given to Lionardo da Vinci. But, as Vasari relates, he spent so much time in trying experiments, and in preparing the wall to receive oil-painting, which he preferred to fresco, that in the interval some changes in the government intervened, and the design was abandoned about 1505. The two cartoons remained for several years open to the public, and artists flocked from every part of Italy to study them. Subsequently they were cut up into separate parts, dispersed, and lost. It is curious that of Michael Angelo's composition only one small copy exists; of Lionardo's, not one. From a

fragment which existed in his time, but which has since disappeared, Rubens made a fine drawing, which was engraved by Edelinck, and is known as the Battle of the Standard.

It was a reproach against Lionardo, in his own time, that he began many things and finished few; that his magnificent designs and projects, whether in art or mechanics, were seldom completed. This may be a subject of regret, but it is unjust to make it a reproach. It was in the nature of the man. The grasp of his mind was so nearly superhuman, that he never, in anything he effected, satisfied himself or realized his own vast conceptions. The most exquisitely finished of his works, those that in the perfection of the execution have excited the wonder and despair of succeeding artists, were put aside by him as unfinished sketches. Most of the pictures now attributed to him were wholly or in part painted by his scholars and imitators from his cartoons. One of the most famous of these was designed for the altarpiece of the church of the convent called the Nunziata. It represented the Virgin Mary seated in the lap of her mother St. Anna, having in her arms the infant Christ, while St. John is playing with a lamb at their feet; St. Anna, looking on with a tender smile, rejoices in her divine offspring. The figures were drawn with such skill, and the various expressions proper to each conveyed with such inimitable truth and grace, that, when exhibited in a chamber of the convent, the inhabitants of the city flocked to see it, and for two days the streets were crowded with people, "as if it had been some solemn festival;" but the picture was never

painted, and the monks of the Nunziata, after waiting long and in vain for their altarpiece, were obliged to employ other artists. The cartoon, or a very fine repetition of it, is now in the possession of our Royal Academy, and it must not be confounded with the St. Anna in the Louvre, a more fantastic and apparently an earlier composition.

Lionardo, during his stay at Florence, painted the portrait of Ginevra Benci, already mentioned in the memoir of Ghirlandajo as the reigning beauty of her time.

We find that in 1502 he was engaged by Cæsar Borgia to visit and report on the fortifications of his territories, and in this office he was employed for two years. In 1503 he formed a plan for turning the course of the Arno, and in the following year he lost his father. In 1505 he modelled the group which we now see over the northern door of the San Giovanni at Florence. In 1514 he was invited to Rome by Leo X., but more in his character of philosopher, mechanic, and alchemist, than as a painter. Here he found Raphael at the height of his fame, and then engaged in his greatest works—the frescoes of the Vatican. Two pictures which Lionardo painted while at Rome—the Madonna of St. Onofrio, and the Holy Family, painted for Filiberta of Savoy, the pope's sister-in-law (which is now at St. Petersburg)—show that even this veteran in art felt the irresistible influence of the genius of his young rival. They are both *Raffuellesque* in the subject and treatment.

It appears that Lionardo was ill satisfied with his

sojourn at Rome. He had long been accustomed to hold the first rank as an artist wherever he resided; whereas at Rome he found himself only one among many who, if they acknowledged his greatness, affected to consider his day as past. He was conscious that many of the improvements in the arts which were now brought into use, and which enabled the painters of the day to produce such extraordinary effects, were invented or introduced by himself. If he could no longer assert that measureless superiority over all others which he had done in his younger days, it was because he himself had opened to them new paths to excellence. The arrival of his old competitor Michael Angelo, and some slight on the part of Leo X., who was annoyed by his speculative and dilatory habits in executing the works intrusted to him, all added to his irritation and disgust. He left Rome, and set out for Pavia, where the French king Francis I. then held his court. He was received by the young monarch with every mark of respect, loaded with favours, and a pension of 700 gold crowns settled on him for life. At the famous conference between Francis I. and Leo X. at Bologna, Lionardo attended his new patron, and was of essential service to him on that occasion. In the following year, 1516, he returned with Francis I. to France, and was attached to the French court as principal painter. It appears, however, that during his residence in France he did not paint a single picture. His health had begun to decline from the time he left Italy; and feeling his end approach, he prepared himself for it by religious meditation, by acts of charity, and by a most conscientious distribution

by will of all his worldly possessions to his relatives and friends. At length, after protracted suffering, this great and most extraordinary man died at Cloux, near Amboise, on the 2nd of May, 1519, being then in his sixty-seventh year. It is to be regretted that we cannot wholly credit the beautiful story of his dying in the arms of Francis I., who, as it is said, had come to visit him on his deathbed. It would indeed have been, as Fuseli expressed it, "an honour to the king, by which Destiny would have atoned to that monarch for his future disaster at Pavia," had the incident really happened, as it has been so often related by biographers, celebrated by poets, represented with a just pride by painters, and willingly believed by all the world; but the well-authenticated fact that the court was *on that day* at St. Germain-en-Laye, whence the royal ordinances are dated, renders the story, unhappily, very doubtful.

We have mentioned a few of the genuine works of Lionardo da Vinci; they are exceedingly rare. It appears certain that not one-third of the pictures attributed to him and bearing his name were the production of his own hand, though they were the creation of his mind, for he generally furnished the cartoons or designs from which his pupils executed pictures of various degrees of excellence.

Thus the admirable picture in our National Gallery, of Christ disputing with the Doctors, though undoubtedly designed by Lionardo, is supposed by some to be executed by his best scholar, Bernardino Luini; by others it is attributed to Francesco Melzi. Those ruined pic-

tures which bear his name at Windsor and at Hampton Court are from the Milanese school.*

Of nine pictures in the Louvre attributed to Lionardo, three only—the St. John, and the two famous portraits of the Mona Lisa and Lucrezia Crivelli—are considered genuine. The others are from his designs and from his school.

In the Florentine Gallery the Medusa is certainly genuine; but the famous Herodias, holding the dish to receive the head of John the Baptist, was probably painted from his cartoon by Luini. His own portrait, in the same gallery (in the Salle des Peintres), is wonderfully fine—indeed the finest of all, and the one which at once attracts and fixes attention.

In the Milan collections are many pictures attributed to him: a few are in private collections in England: Lord Ashburton has an exquisite group of the infant Christ and St. John playing with a lamb; and Lord Suffolk has a picture of the Virgin and Child, with the little St. John adoring, with a rocky background, celebrated for the perfect execution.†

But it is the MS. notes and designs left behind him that give us the best idea of the indefatigable industry

* The Falconer at Windsor I believe to be by Holbein, and it is curious that this is not the first nor only Holbein which has been attributed to Lionardo. There is one in the Liverpool Institute, and at Dresden another—the wonderful portrait of a man with a gold medal in his cap. We have an idea of Holbein's style in England diametrically opposite to that of Lionardo.

† The story of this precious picture is one of the romances in the history of art. It was stolen from Lord Suffolk's country seat in 1857, and all trace of it lost for many months, during which time it was hidden behind an old cupboard in the House of Lords.

of this "myriad-minded man," and the almost incredible extent of his acquirements. In the Ambrosian Library at Milan there are twelve huge volumes of his works, relative to arts, chemistry, mathematics, &c.; one of them contains a collection of anatomical drawings, which the celebrated anatomist Dr. Hunter described as the most wonderful things of the kind for accuracy and beauty that he had ever beheld. In the Royal Library at Windsor there are three volumes of MSS. and drawings, containing a vast variety of subjects—portraits, heads, groups, and single figures; fine anatomical studies of horses; a battle of elephants, full of spirit; drawings in optics, hydraulics, and perspective; plans of military machines, maps and surveys of rivers; beautiful and accurate drawings of plants and rocks, to be introduced into his pictures; musical airs noted in his own hand, perhaps his own compositions; anatomical subjects, with elaborate notes and explanations. In the Royal Library at Paris there is a volume of philosophical treatises, from which extracts have been published by Venturi. In the Holkham Collection is a MS. treatise on hydraulics. The 'Treatise on Painting,' by Lionardo da Vinci, has been translated from the original Italian into French, English, and German, and is the foundation of all that has since been written on the subject, whether relating to the theory or to the practice of the art. His MSS. are particularly difficult to read or decipher, as he had a habit of writing from right to left, instead of from left to right. What was his reason for this singularity has not been explained.

The scholars of Lionardo da Vinci, and those artists

formed in the academy which he founded in Milan, under the patronage of Ludovico il Moro, comprise that school of art known as the Milanese or Lombard school. They are distinguished by a lengthy and graceful style of drawing, a particular amenity and sweetness of expression (which in the inferior painters degenerated into affectation and a sort of vapid smile), and particularly by the transparent lights and shadows—the *chiaroscuro*, of which Lionardo was the inventor or discoverer. The most eminent painters were Bernardino Luini; Marco Uggione, or D'Oggioni; Antonio Beltraffio; Francesco Melzi; and Andrea Salai. All these studied under the immediate tuition of Lionardo, and painted most of the pictures ascribed to him. Gaudenzio Ferrari and Cesare da Sesto imitated him, and owed their celebrity to his influence.

32. Michael Angelo Buonarroti.

Engraved by Buonasone.

MICHAEL-ANGELO BUONARROTI.

BORN 1474; DIED 1564.

WE have spoken of Lionardo da Vinci. Michael Angelo, the other great luminary of art, was twenty-two years younger; but the more severe and reflective cast of his mind rendered their difference of age far less in effect than in reality. It is usual to compare Michael Angelo with Raphael, but he is more aptly compared with Lionardo da Vinci. All the great artists of that time, even Raphael himself, were influenced more or less by these two extraordinary men, but they exercised no influence on each other. They started from opposite points; they pursued throughout their whole existence, and in all they planned and achieved, a course as different as their respective characters. It would be very curious and interesting to carry out the comparison in detail; to show the contrast in organisation, in temper, in talent, in taste, which existed between men so highly and so equally endowed, but our limits forbid this indulgence. We shall therefore only observe that, considered as artists, they emulated each other in variety of power, but that Lionardo was more the painter than the sculptor and architect; Michael Angelo was more the sculptor and architect than the painter. Both sought true inspiration in Nature, but they beheld her with different

eyes: Lionardo, who designed admirably, appears to have seen no *outline* in objects, and laboured all his life to convey, by colour and light and shade, the impression of beauty and the illusive effect of rotundity. He preferred the use of oil to fresco, because the mellow smoothness and transparency of the vehicle was more capable of giving the effects he desired. Michael Angelo, on the contrary, turned his whole attention to the definition of *form*, and the expression of life and power through action and movement; he regarded the illusive effects of painting as meretricious and beneath his notice, and despised oil-painting as a style for women and children. Considered as men, both Lionardo and Michael Angelo were as high-minded and generous as they were gifted and original; but the former was as remarkable for his versatile and social accomplishments, his love of pleasure and habits of expense, as the latter for his stern inflexible temper, and his temperate, frugal, and secluded habits.

Michael Angelo Buonarroti was born at Settignano, near Florence, in the year 1474. He was descended from a family once noble—even amongst the noblest of the feudal lords of northern Italy—the Counts of Canossa; but that branch of it represented by his father, Luigi Lionardo Buonarroti Simoni, had for some generations become poorer and poorer, until the last descendant was thankful to accept an office in the law, and had been nominated magistrate or mayor (*Podesta*) of Chiusi. In this situation he had limited his ambition to the prospect of seeing his eldest son a notary or advocate in his native city. The young Michael Angelo

showed the utmost distaste for the studies allotted to him, and was continually escaping from his home and from his desk to haunt the ateliers of the painters, particularly that of Ghirlandajo, who was then at the height of his reputation, and of whom some account has been already given.

The father of Michael Angelo, who found his family increase too rapidly for his means, had destined some of his sons for commerce (it will be recollected that in Genoa and Florence the most powerful nobles were merchants or manufacturers), and others for civil or diplomatic employments: but the fine arts, as being at that time productive of little honour or emolument, he held in no esteem, and treated these tastes of his eldest son sometimes with contempt and sometimes even with harshness. Michael Angelo, however, had formed some friendships among the young painters, and particularly with Francesco Granacci, one of the best pupils of Ghirlandajo; he contrived to borrow models and drawings, and studied them in secret with such persevering assiduity and consequent improvement that Ghirlandajo, captivated by his genius, undertook to plead his cause to his father, and at length prevailed over the old man's family pride and prejudices. At the age of fourteen Michael Angelo was received into the studio of Ghirlandajo as a regular pupil, and bound to him for three years; and such was the precocious talent of the boy, that, instead of being paid for his instruction, Ghirlandajo undertook to pay the father, Lionardo Buonarroti, for the first, second, and third years, six, eight, and twelve golden florins, as payment for the

advantage he expected to derive from the labour of the son. Thus was the vocation of the young artist decided for life.

At that time Lorenzo the Magnificent reigned over Florence. He had formed in his palace and gardens a collection of antique marbles, busts, statues, fragments, which he had converted into an academy for the use of young artists, placing at the head of it as director a sculptor of some eminence named Bertoldo. Michael Angelo was one of the first who, through the recommendation of Ghirlandajo, was received into this new academy, afterwards so famous and so memorable in the history of art. The young man, then not quite sixteen, had hitherto occupied himself chiefly in drawing; but now, fired by the beauties he beheld around him, and by the example and success of a fellow-pupil, Torregiano, he set himself to model in clay, and at length to copy in marble what was before him; but, as was natural in a character and genius so steeped in individuality, his copies became not so much imitations of form as original embodyings of the leading idea. For example: his first attempt in marble, when he was about fifteen, was a copy of an antique mask of an old laughing Faun: he treated this in a manner so different from the original and so spirited as to excite the astonishment of Lorenzo de' Medici, who criticised it, however, saying, "Thou shouldst have remembered that old folks do not retain all their teeth; some of them are always wanting." The boy struck the teeth out, giving it at once the most grotesque expression; and Lorenzo, infinitely amused, sent for his father and offered to attach his son to his own particular service, and to

undertake the entire care of his education. The father consented, on condition of receiving for himself an office under the government, and thenceforth Michael Angelo was lodged in the palace of the Medici and treated by Lorenzo as his son.*

Such sudden and increasing favour excited the envy and jealousy of his companions, particularly of Torregiano, who, being of a violent and arrogant temper (that of Michael Angelo was by no means conciliating), sought every means of showing his hatred. On one occasion a quarrel having ensued while they were at work together, Torregiano turned in fury and struck his rival a blow with his mallet, which disfigured him for life. His nose was flattened to his face, and Torregiano, having by this "sacrilegious stroke" gratified his hatred, was banished from Florence.

It is fair, however, to give Torregiano's own account of this incident as he related it to Benvenuto Cellini many years afterwards.—"This Buonarroti and I, when we were young men, went to study in the church of the Carmelites, in the chapel of Masaccio: it was customary with Buonarroti to rally those who were learning to draw there. One day, among others, a sarcasm of his having stung me to the quick, I was extremely irritated, and, doubling my fist, gave him such a violent blow on the nose that I felt the bone and cartilage yield as if

* This mask, which is really admirable in its way, is now in the Florentine Gallery, where it hangs in the *Gabinetto del Ermafrodito*, over the unfinished bust of Brutus, a later and celebrated work of the same Michael Angelo: the manner in which the teeth had been struck from the jaw of the old Faun I certified myself by a close examination of the mask in the winter of 1858.

they had been made of paste, and the mark I then gave him he will carry to his grave."

Thus it appears that the blow was not unprovoked, and that Michael Angelo, even at the age of sixteen, indulged in that contemptuous arrogance and sarcastic speech which, in his maturer age, made him so many enemies. But to return.

Michael Angelo continued his studies under the auspices of Lorenzo; but just as he had reached his eighteenth year he lost his generous patron, his second father, and was thenceforth thrown on his own resources. It is true that the son of Lorenzo, Piero de' Medici, continued to extend his favour to the young artist, but with so little comprehension of his genius and character, that on one occasion, during the severe winter of 1494, he set him to form a statue of snow for the amusement of his guests.

Michael Angelo, while he yielded, perforce, to the caprices of his protector, turned the energies of his mind to a new study—that of anatomy—and pursued it with all that fervour which belonged to his character. His attention was at the same time directed to literature, by the counsels and conversations of a very celebrated scholar and poet, then residing in the court of Piero—Angelo Poliziano; and he pursued at the same time the cultivation of his mind and the practice of his art. Engrossed by his own studies, he was scarcely aware of what was passing around him, nor of the popular intrigues which were preparing the ruin of the Medici; suddenly this powerful family were flung from sovereignty to temporary disgrace and exile; and Michael

Angelo, as one of their retainers, was obliged to fly from Florence, and took refuge in the city of Bologna. During the year he spent there he found a friend, who employed him on some works of sculpture; and on his return to Florence he executed a Cupid in marble, of such beauty that it found its way into the cabinet of the Duchess of Mantua * as a real antique. On the discovery that the author of this beautiful statue was a young man of two-and-twenty, the Cardinal San Giorgio invited him to Rome, and for some time lodged him in his palace. Here Michael Angelo, surrounded and inspired by the grand remains of antiquity, pursued his studies with unceasing energy: he produced a statue of Bacchus, which added to his reputation; and in 1500, at the age of five-and-twenty, he produced the famous group of the dead Christ on the knees of his Virgin Mother (called *the Pietà*), which is now in the church of St. Peter's at Rome; † this last, being fre

* Isabella d'Este, Marchesana of Mantua, was not only the first woman, but the first European sovereign, who made a collection of beautiful objects of art, including gems, antiques, pictures, sculpture, and curiosities of every kind.

† This Pietà is the only work whereon Michael Angelo inscribed his name. The circumstance which induced him to do this is curious. Some time after the group was fixed in its place, he was standing before it considering its effect, when two strangers entered the church, and began, even in his hearing, to dispute concerning the author of the work, which they agreed in exalting to the skies as a masterpiece. One of them, who was a Bolognese, insisted that it was by a sculptor of Bologna, whom he named. Michael Angelo listened in silence, and the next night, when all slept, he entered the church, and by the light of a lantern engraved his name, in deep indelible characters, where it might best be seen—on the band which confines the drapery of the Virgin. There is a fine cast in the Crystal Palace.

quently copied and imitated, obtained him so much applause and reputation, that he was recalled to Florence, to undertake several public works, and we find him once more established in his native city in the year 1502.

Hitherto we have seen Michael Angelo wholly devoted to the study and practice of sculpture; but soon after his return to Florence he was called upon to compete with Lionardo da Vinci in executing the cartoons for the frescoes with which it was intended to decorate the walls of the Palazzo Vecchio, or town-hall, of Florence (1504). The cartoon of Lionardo has been already described: that of Michael Angelo represented an incident which occurred during the siege of Pisa—a group of Florentine soldiers bathing in the Arno hear the trumpet which proclaims a sortie of the enemy, and spring at once to the combat. He chose this subject perhaps as affording ample opportunity to exhibit his peculiar and wonderful skill in designing the human figure. All is life and movement. The warriors, some already clothed, but the greater part undressed, hasten to obey the call to battle; they are seen clambering up the banks—buckling on their armour—rushing forward, hurriedly, eagerly. There are, altogether, about thirty figures, the size of life, drawn with black chalk, and relieved with white. This cartoon was regarded by his contemporaries as the most perfect of his works; that is, in respect to the execution merely: as to subject, sentiment, and character, it would not certainly rank with the finest of his works; for, with every possible variety of gesture and attitude, exhibited with admirable

and lifelike energy and the most consummate knowledge of form, there was only one expression throughout, and that the least intellectual, majestic, or interesting—the expression of hurry and surprise. While this great work existed, it was a study for all the young artists of Italy; but Michael Angelo, who had suffered in person from the jealousy of one rival, was destined to suffer yet more cruelly from the envy of another. It is said that Bandinelli, the sculptor, profited by the troubles of Florence to tear in pieces this monument of the glory and genius of a man he detested; but in doing so he has only left an enduring stain upon his own fame. A small old copy of the principal part of the composition exists in the collection of the Earl of Leicester, at Holkham, and has been finely engraved by Schiavonetti.

In 1506 Michael Angelo was summoned to Rome by Pope Julius II., who, while living, had conceived the idea of erecting a most splendid monument to perpetuate his memory. For this work, which was never completed, Michael Angelo executed the famous statue of Moses, seated, grasping his flowing beard with one hand, and with the other sustaining the tables of the Law.* While employed on this tomb, the pope commanded him to undertake also the decoration of the ceiling of the Sistine

* Now in S. Pietro in Vincula, at Rome. Other fragments of the design for this sumptuous tomb are a group representing a warrior overcoming another, called *La Vittoria,* and now placed in the great hall of the Palazzo Vecchio; six unfinished statues of prisoners or slaves, representing the provinces subjected by Julius II.; two now in the Louvre (of the finest there is a cast in the Crystal Palace); and four others preserved in the Boboli Gardens at Florence.

Chapel. The reader may remember that Pope Sixtus IV., in the year 1473, erected his famous chapel, and summoned the best painters of that time, Signorelli, Cosimo Roselli, Perugino, and Ghirlandajo, to decorate the interior: but down to the year 1508 the ceiling remained without any ornament; and Michael Angelo was called upon to cover this enormous vault, a space of one hundred and fifty feet in length by fifty in breadth, with a series of subjects representing the most important events connected, either literally or typically, with the fall and redemption of mankind.

No part of Michael Angelo's long life is so interesting, so full of characteristic incident, as the history of his intercourse with Pope Julius II., which began in 1505, and ended only with the death of the pope in 1513.

Michael Angelo had at all times a lofty idea of his own dignity as an artist, and never would stoop either to flatter a patron or to conciliate a rival. Julius II., though now seventy-four, was as impatient of contradiction, as fiery in temper, as full of magnificent and ambitious projects, as if he had been in the prime of life; in his service was the famous architect Bramante, who beheld with jealousy and alarm the increasing fame of Michael Angelo, and his influence with the pontiff, and set himself by indirect means to lessen both. He insinuated to Julius that it was ominous to erect his own mausoleum during his lifetime, and the pope gradually fell off in his attentions to Michael Angelo, and neglected to supply him with the necessary funds for carrying on the work. On one occasion Michael Angelo, finding it difficult to obtain access to the pope, sent a

message to him to this effect, "that henceforth, if his holiness desired to see him, he should send to seek him elsewhere;" and the same night, leaving orders with his servants to dispose of his property, he departed for Florence. The pope despatched five couriers after him with threats, persuasions, promises—but in vain. He wrote to the Gonfaloniere Soderini, then at the head of the government of Florence, commanding him, on pain of his extreme displeasure, to send Michael Angelo back to him; but the inflexible artist absolutely refused: three months were spent in vain negotiations. Soderini, at length, fearing the pope's anger, prevailed on Michael Angelo to return, and sent with him his relation Cardinal Soderini to make up the quarrel between the high contending powers. The pope was then at Bologna, and at the moment when Michael Angelo arrived he was at supper; he desired him to be brought into his presence, and on seeing him exclaimed in a transport of fury, "Instead of obeying our commands and coming to us, thou hast waited till we came in search of thee!" (Bologna being much nearer to Florence than to Rome). Michael Angelo fell on his knees, and entreated pardon with a loud voice. "Holy father," said he, "my offence has not arisen from an evil nature; I could no longer endure the insults offered to me in the palace of your holiness!" He remained kneeling, and the pope continued to bend his brows in silence; when a certain bishop, in attendance on the Cardinal Soderini, thinking to mend the matter, interfered with excuses, representing that "Michael Angelo — poor man!—had erred through ignorance; that artists were

wont to presume too much on their genius," and so forth. The irascible pope, interrupting him with a sharp blow across the shoulders with his staff, exclaimed, "It is thou that art ignorant and presuming, to insult him whom we feel ourselves bound to honour; take thyself out of our sight!" And as the terrified prelate stood transfixed with amazement, the pope's attendants forced him out of the room. Julius then, turning to Michael Angelo, gave him his forgiveness and his blessing, and commanded him never again to leave him, promising him on all occasions his favour and protection. This extraordinary scene took place in November, 1506. It was some time after this (about 1512) that Julius II., in speaking of Michael Angelo to Sebastian del Piombo, again showed, in the midst of his anger, his entire appreciation of the man and the artist. "Look," he said, "at the work of Raphael! (the fresco of the Heliodorus). He no sooner saw the work of Michael Angelo (the ceiling of the Sistine) than he threw aside the manner of Perugino and tried to imitate that of Michael Angelo, who is, notwithstanding (here he burst into a rage), a *terrible* fellow! There is no getting on with him!"

The work on the tomb was not, however, immediately resumed. Michael Angelo was commanded to execute a colossal statue of the pope to be erected in front of the principal church of Bologna. He threw into the figure and attitude so much of the haughty and resolute character of the original, that Julius, on seeing the model, asked him, with a smile, whether he intended to represent him as blessing or as cursing? To which

Michael Angelo prudently replied, that he intended to represent his holiness as admonishing the inhabitants of Bologna to obedience and submission. "And what," said the pope, well pleased, "wilt thou put in the other hand?" "A book, may it please your holiness." "A book, man!" exclaimed the pope, "put rather a sword; thou knowest I am no scholar." The fate of this statue, however we may lament it, was fitting and characteristic: a few years afterwards, in 1511, the populace of Bologna rebelled against the popedom, flung down the statue of Julius, and out of the fragments was constructed a cannon, which from its origin was styled *La Giuliana.*

On his return to Rome, Michael Angelo wished to have resumed his work on the mausoleum; but the pope had resolved on the completion of the Sistine Chapel: he commanded Michael Angelo to undertake the decoration of the vaulted ceiling; and the artist was obliged, though reluctantly, to obey. At this time the frescoes which Raphael and his pupils were painting in the chambers of the Vatican had excited the admiration of all Rome. Michael Angelo, who had never exercised himself in the mechanical part of the art of fresco, invited from Florence several painters of eminence, to execute his designs under his own superintendence; but they could not reach the grandeur of his conceptions, which became enfeebled under their hands, and one morning, in a mood of impatience, he destroyed all that they had done, closed the doors of the chapel against them, and would not thenceforth admit them to his presence. He then shut himself up, and proceeded with incredible perseverance and energy to accomplish

his task alone; he even prepared his colours with his own hands. He began with the end towards the door; and in the two compartments first painted (though not first in the series), the Deluge, and the Vineyard of Noah, he made the figures too numerous and too small to produce their full effect from below, a fault which he corrected in those executed subsequently. When almost half the work was completed, the pope insisted on viewing what was done, and the astonishment and admiration it excited rendered him more and more eager to have the whole completed at once. The progress, however, was not rapid enough to suit the impatient temper of the pontiff. On one occasion he demanded of the artist *when* he meant to finish it; to which Michael Angelo replied calmly, "When I can." "When thou canst!" exclaimed the fiery old pope: "thou hast a mind that I should have thee thrown from the scaffold!" At length, on the day of All Saints, 1512, the ceiling was uncovered to public view. Michael Angelo had employed on the painting only, without reckoning the time spent in preparing the cartoons, twenty-two months, and he received in payment three thousand crowns.

To describe this grand work in all its details would occupy many pages. It will give some idea of its immensity to say that it contains in all upwards of two hundred figures, the greater part of colossal size; and that, with regard to invention, grandeur, and expression, it has been a school for study, and a theme for wonder, during three successive ages. In the centre of the ceiling are four large compartments and five small ones.

In the former are represented the Creation of the Sun and Moon; the Creation of Adam, perhaps the most majestic design that was ever conceived by the genius of man; the Fall and the Expulsion from Paradise; the Deluge. In the five small compartments are represented the Gathering of the Waters (*Gen.* i. 9); the Almighty separating Light from Darkness; the Creation of Eve; the Sacrifice of Noah; and Noah's Vineyard: around these, in the curved part of the ceiling, are the Prophets and the Sibyls who foretold the birth of Christ. These are among the most wonderful forms that modern art has called into life. They are all seated and employed in contemplating books or antique rolls of manuscript, with genii in attendance. These mighty beings sit before us, looking down with solemn meditative aspects, or upwards with inspired looks that see into futurity. All their forms are massive and sublime, all are full of varied and individual character.

Beneath these again is a series of groups representing the earthly genealogy of Christ, in which the figures have a repose, a contemplative grace and tenderness, which place them among the most interesting of all the productions of Michael Angelo. These and the figure of Eve in the Fall show how intense was his feeling of beauty, though he frequently disdained to avail himself of it. In the four corners of the ceiling are representations of the miraculous deliverance of the people of Israel, in allusion to the general Redemption of man by the Saviour, viz. Holofernes vanquished by Judith, David overcoming Goliath, the Brazen Serpent, and the Punishment of Haman.

There is a small print in Kugler's Handbook which will give a general idea of the arrangement of this famous ceiling: there is one on a large scale by Piroli, and a still larger one by Cunego, which, if accessible, will answer the purpose better. In our National School of Design there is an admirable coloured drawing lately brought from Rome by Mr. L. Gruner, which will convey a very correct idea not merely of the arrangement of the subjects and figures, but of the harmonious disposition of the colours—a merit not usually allowed to Michael Angelo. This has been published in colours at the expense of Mr. Holford of Blaise Castle, the author of a Life of Michael Angelo.

The collection of engravings after Michael Angelo in the British Museum is very imperfect, but it contains some fine old prints from the Prophets which should be studied by those who wish to understand the true merit of this great master, of whom Sir Joshua Reynolds said that "to kiss the hem of his garment, to catch the slightest of his perfections, would be glory and distinction enough for an ambitious man!"

When the Sistine Chapel was completed Michael Angelo was in his thirty-ninth year; fifty years of a glorious though troubled career were still before him.

Pope Julius II. died in 1513, and was succeeded by Leo X., the son of Lorenzo the Magnificent. As a Florentine and his father's son, we might naturally have expected that he would have gloried in patronising and employing Michael Angelo; but such was not the case. There was something in the stern, unbending character,

and retired and abstemious habits of Michael Angelo, repulsive to the temper of Leo, who preferred the graceful and amiable Raphael, then in the prime of his life and genius: hence arose the memorable rivalry between Michael Angelo and Raphael, which on the part of the latter was merely generous emulation, while it must be confessed that something like scorn mingled with the feelings of Michael Angelo. The pontificate of Leo X., an interval of ten years, was the least productive period of his life. In the year 1519, when the Signoria of Florence was negociating with Ravenna for the restoration of the remains of Dante, he petitioned the pope that he might be allowed to execute at his own labour and expense a monument to the "DIVINE POET." In the same year (he was then at Florence) Sebastian del Piombo writes to him concerning the success of his great picture, the Raising of Lazarus, now in our National Gallery. Michael Angelo had been sent to Florence to superintend the building of the church of San Lorenzo and the completion of Santa Croce; but he differed with the pope on the choice of the marble, quarrelled with the officials, and scarcely anything was accomplished. Clement VII., another Medici, was elected pope in 1523. He was the son of that Giuliano de' Medici who was assassinated by the Pazzi in 1478. He had conceived the idea of consecrating a chapel in the church of San Lorenzo, to receive the tombs of his ancestors and relations, and which should be adorned with all the splendour of art. Michael Angelo planned and built the chapel, and for its interior decoration designed and executed six of his

greatest works in sculpture. There are casts of these likewise in the Crystal Palace, in the Italian Court. Two are seated statues: one representing Lorenzo de' Medici, Duke of Urbino, who died young, in 1519, living only to be the father of Catherine de' Medici (and, as it has been well said, "had an evil spirit assumed the human shape to propagate mischief, he could not have done worse"); the other, opposite, his cousin Giuliano de' Medici, who was as weak as Lorenzo was vicious. The other four are colossal recumbent figures, entitled the Night, the Morning, the Dawn, and the Twilight; though why so called, and why these figures were introduced in such a situation—what was the intention, the meaning of the artist—does not seem to be understood by any of the critics on art who have written on the subject. The statue of Lorenzo is almost awful in its sullen grandeur. He looks down in a contemplative attitude; hence the appellation by which the figure is known in Italy—Il Pensièro (*Thought* or *Meditation*). But there is mischief in the look—something vague, ominous—difficult to be described. Altogether it well nigh realizes our idea of Milton's Satan brooding over his infernal plans for the ruin of mankind. Mr. Rogers styles it truly "the most real and unreal thing that ever came from the chisel." And his description of the whole chapel is as vivid as poetry, and as accurate as truth, could make it:—

> "Nor then forget that chamber of the dead
> Where the gigantic shades of Night and Day
> Turn'd into stone, rest everlastingly.
> There from age to age
> Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.

That is the Duke LORENZO. Mark him well!
He meditates; his head upon his hand.
What from beneath his helm-like bonnet scowls?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless skull?
'Tis lost in shade—yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates and is intolerable." *

While Michael Angelo was engaged in these works his progess was interrupted by events which threw all Italy into commotion. Rome was taken and sacked by the Constable de Bourbon in 1527. The Medici were once more expelled from Florence; and Michael Angelo, in the midst of these strange vicissitudes, was employed by the republic to fortify his native city against his former patrons. Great as an engineer, as in every other department of art and science, he defended Florence for nine months. At length the city was given up by treachery, and, fearing the vengeance of the conquerors, Michael Angelo fled and concealed himself; but Clement VII. was too sensible of his merit to allow him to remain long in disgrace and exile. He was pardoned, and continued ever afterwards in high favour with the pope, who employed him on the sculptures in the chapel of San Lorenzo during the remainder of his pontificate.

In the year 1531 he had completed the statues of Night and Morning, and Clement, who heard of his incessant labours, sent him a brief, commanding him, *on pain of excommunication*, to take care of his health, and

* Mr. Rogers possessed the small sketch or model (Michael Angelo's first thought) for this wonderful figure. It used to stand on a pedestal in the corner of his breakfast-room, looking ominous. At the sale of his collection it was sold for 21*l*. I know not who is now the fortunate possessor.

not to accept of any other work but that which his holiness had assigned him.

Clement VII. was succeeded by Pope Paul III., of the Farnese family, in 1534. This pope, though nearly seventy when he was elected, was as anxious to immortalize his name by great undertakings as any of his predecessors had been before him. His first wish was to complete the decoration of the interior of the Sistine Chapel, left unfinished by Julius II. and Leo X. He summoned Michael Angelo, who endeavoured to excuse himself, pleading other engagements; but the pope would listen to no excuses which interfered with his sovereign power to dissolve all other obligations; and thus the artist found himself, after an interval of twenty years, most reluctantly forced to abandon sculpture for painting; and, as Vasari expresses it, he consented to serve Pope Paul only because he *could* not do otherwise.

In representing the Last Judgment on the wall of the upper end of the Sistine Chapel, Michael Angelo only adhered to the original plan as it had been adopted by Julius II., and afterwards by Clement VII.

In the centre of this vast composition he has placed the figure of the Messiah in the act of pronouncing the sentence of condemnation, "Depart from me, ye accursed, into everlasting fire;" and by his side the Virgin Mary: around them, on each side, the apostles, the patriarchs, the prophets, and a company of saints and martyrs: above these are groups of angels bearing the cross, the crown of thorns, and other instruments of the passion of our Lord; and farther down another group

of angels holding the book of life, and sounding the awful trumpets which call up the dead to judgment. Below, on one side, the resurrection and ascent of the blessed; and on the other, demons drag down the condemned to everlasting fire. The number of figures is at least two hundred. Those who wish to form a correct idea of the composition and arrangement should consult the engravings: several of different sizes and different degrees of excellence are in the British Museum.

There can be no doubt that Michael Angelo's Last Judgment is the greatest effort of human skill, as a creation of art; yet is it full of faults in taste and sentiment; and the greatest fault of all is in the conception of the principal personage, the Messiah as judge. The figure, expression, attitude, are all unworthy—one might almost say *vulgar* in the worst sense; for is there not both profaneness and vulgarity in representing the merciful Redeemer of mankind, even when he "comes to judgment," as inspired merely by wrath and vengeance?—as a thick-set athlete, who, with a gesture of sullen anger, is about to punish the wicked with his fist? It has been already observed that Michael Angelo borrowed the idea of the two figures of the Virgin and Christ from the old fresco of Orcagna in the Campo Santo; but in improving the drawing he has wholly lost and degraded the sentiment. In the groups of the pardoned, as Kugler has well observed, we look in vain for "the glory of heaven—for beings bearing the stamp of divine holiness and renunciation of human weakness: everywhere we meet with the expression of human

passion, human efforts; we see no choir of solemn tranquil forms—no harmonious unity of clear grand lines produced by ideal draperies; but in their stead a confused crowd of naked bodies in violent attitudes, unaccompanied by any of the characteristics made sacred by holy tradition" On the other hand, the groups of the condemned, and the astonishing energy and variety of the struggling and suspended forms, are most fearful: and it is quite true that when contemplated from a distance the whole representation fills the mind with wonder and mysterious horror. It was intended to represent the defeat and fall of the rebel angels on the opposite wall (above and on each side of the principal door), but this was never done; and the *intention* of Michael Angelo in the decoration of the Sistine Chapel remains incomplete. The picture of the Last Judgment was finished and first exhibited to the people on Christmas-day, 1551, under the pontificate of Paul III. Michael Angelo was then in his sixty-seventh year, and had been employed on the painting and cartoons nearly nine years.

The same Pope Paul III. had in the mean time constructed a beautiful chapel, which was called after his name the chapel *Paolina*, and dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul. Michael Angelo was called upon to design the decorations. He painted on one side the Conversion of St. Paul, and on the other the Crucifixion of St. Peter, which were completed in 1549. But these fine paintings —of which existing old engravings (to be found in the British Museum) give a better idea than the blackened

and faded remains of the original frescoes—were from the first ill-disposed as to the locality, and badly lighted, and at present they excite little interest compared with the more famous works in the Sistine.

During the period that Michael Angelo was engaged in the decoration of the Pauline Chapel, he executed a group in marble—the Virgin with the dead Redeemer and two other figures—which was never completely finished. It is now at Florence, behind the high altar of the Cathedral. It is full of tragic grandeur and expression.*

With the frescoes in the Pauline Chapel ends Michael Angelo's career as a painter. He had been appointed chief architect of St. Peter's in 1547 by Paul III. He was then in his seventy-second year; and during the remainder of his life, a period of sixteen years, we find him wholly devoted to architecture. His vast and daring genius finding ample scope in the completion of St. Peter's, he has left behind him in his capacity of architect yet greater marvels than he had achieved as painter and sculptor. Who that has seen the cupola of St. Peter's soaring into the skies, but will think almost with awe

* An eyewitness has left us a very graphic description of the energy with which, even in old age, Michael Angelo handled his chisel:—"I can say that I have seen Michael Angelo at the age of sixty, and with a body announcing weakness, make more chips of marble fly about in a quarter of an hour than would three of the strongest young sculptors in an hour,—a thing almost incredible to him who has not beheld it. He went to work with such impetuosity and fury of manner that I feared almost every moment to see the block split into pieces. It would seem as if, inflamed by the idea of greatness which inspired him, this great man attacked with a species of fury the marble which concealed the statue."—*Blaise de Vigenère.*

of the universal and majestic intellect of the man who reared it?

There is a striking anecdote of Mrs. Siddons, which at this moment comes back upon the mind. When standing before the Apollo Belvedere, then in the gallery of the Louvre, she exclaimed, after a long pause, "How great must be the Being who created the genius which produced such a form as this!"—a thought characteristic of her mind, but more fitly inspired by the works of Michael Angelo than by those of any artist the world has yet seen. They bear impressed upon them a character of greatness, of durability, of sublimity of invention and consummate skill in contrivance, which fills the contemplative mind, and leads it irresistibly from the created up to the Creator.

As our subject is painting, not architecture, we shall not dwell much on this period of the life of Michael Angelo. He filled the office of chief architect of St. Peter's through the pontificates of Julius III., Pius IV., and Pius V. He accepted the office with reluctance, pleading his great age and the obstacles and difficulties he was likely to meet with from the jealousies and intrigues of his rivals and the ignorance and intermeddling of the pope's officials. He solemnly called Heaven to witness that it was only from a deep sense of duty that he yielded to the pope's wishes; and he proved that this was no empty profession by constantly refusing any salary or remuneration. Notwithstanding the difficulties he encountered, the provocations and the disgusts most intolerable to his haughty and impatient spirit, he held on his way with a stern perseverance

till he had seen his great designs so far carried out that they could not be wholly abandoned or perverted by his successors.*

When his sovereign the Grand Duke of Florence endeavoured, by the most munificent offers and promises, to attract him to his court, he constantly pleaded that to leave his great work unaccomplished would be on his part "a *sin*, a *shame*, and the ruin of the greatest religious monument in Christian Europe." Michael Angelo considered that he was engaged in a work of piety, and for this reason, "for his own honour and the honour of God," he refused all emolument.

It appears, from the evidence of contemporary writers, that in the last years of his life the acknowledged worth and genius of Michael Angelo, his wide-spread fame, and his unblemished integrity, combined with his venerable age and the haughtiness and reserve of his deportment to invest him with a sort of princely dignity. It is recorded that, when he waited on pope Julius III. to receive his commands, the pontiff rose on his approach, seated him, in spite of his excuses, on his right hand; and while a crowd of cardinals, prelates, ambassadors, were standing round at humble distance, carried on the conference, as equal with equal. When the Grand Duke Cosmo was in Rome in 1560 he visited Michael Angelo, uncovered in his presence, and stood with his hat in his hand while speaking to him; but from the time when he made himself the tyrant of

* This, however, applies only to the stupendous dome: his design for the façade, and even the original form of the church, having been subsequently altered and spoiled.

Florence he never could persuade Michael Angelo to visit, even for a day, his native city.

One of the most beautiful anecdotes recorded of Michael Angelo in his later years, and one of the very few amiable traits in his character, was his strong and generous attachment to his old servant Urbino. One day, as Urbino stood by him while he worked, he said to him, "My poor Urbino! what wilt thou do when I am gone?' '"Alas!" replied Urbino, "I must then seek another master!" "No," replied Michael Angelo, "that shall never be!" and he immediately presented him with two thousand crowns, thus rendering him independent of himself and others. Urbino, however, continued in his service, and, when seized with his last illness, Michael Angelo, the stern, the sarcastic, the overbearing Michael Angelo, nursed him with the tenderness and patience of a mother, sleeping in his clothes on a couch that he might be ever near him. The old man died at last, leaving his master almost inconsolable. "My Urbino is dead," he writes to Vasari, "to my infinite grief and sorrow. Living, he served me truly, and in his death he taught me how to die. I have now no other hope than to rejoin him in Paradise!"

The arrogance imputed to Michael Angelo seems rather to have arisen from a contempt for others than from any overweening opinion of himself. He was too proud to be vain. He had placed his standard of perfection so high, that to the latest hour of his life he considered himself as striving after that ideal excellence which had been revealed to him, but to which he conceived that others were blind or indifferent. In allusion to

his own imperfections, he made a drawing, since become famous, which represents an aged man in a go-cart, and underneath the words "*Ancora impara*" ("still learning").

He continued to labour unremittingly, and with the same resolute energy of mind and purpose, till the gradual decay of his strength warned him of his approaching end. He did not suffer from any particular malady, and his mind was strong and clear to the last. He died at Rome, on the 18th of February, 1564, in the eighty-eighth year of his age. A few days before his death he dictated his will in these few simple words: "I bequeath my soul to God, my body to the earth, and my possessions to my nearest relations." His nephew, Lionardo Buonarroti, who was his principal heir, by the orders of the Grand Duke Cosmo had his remains secretly conveyed out of Rome and brought to Florence; they were with due honours deposited in the church of Santa Croce, under a costly monument, on which we may see his noble bust surrounded by three very commonplace and ill-executed statues representing the arts in which he excelled—Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. They might have added *Poetry;* for Michael Angelo was so fine a poet that his productions would have given him fame, though he had never peopled the Sistine with his giant creations, nor "*suspended the Pantheon in the air.*"* The object to whom his poems are chiefly ad-

* The dome of the Pantheon, which appears self-sustained, had, from the time of Augustus Cæsar, attracted the wonder and admiration of all beholders, as a marvel of scientific architecture. Michael Angelo said, on some occasion, "I will take the Pantheon and suspend it in the air;" and he did so.

dressed, Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of Pescara, was the widow of the celebrated commander who overcame Francis I. at the battle of Pavia; herself a poetess, and one of the most celebrated women of her time for beauty, talents, virtue, and piety. She died in 1547. Several of Michael Angelo's sonnets have been translated by Wordsworth, and a selection of his poems, with a very learned and eloquent introduction, has been published by Mr. John Edward Taylor, in a little volume entitled 'Michael Angelo a Poet.'

It must be borne in recollection that the pictures ascribed to Michael Angelo in catalogues and picture galleries are in every instance copies made by his scholars from his designs and models. Only one easel picture is acknowledged as the genuine production of his hand. It is a Holy Family in the Florentine Gallery, which as a composition is very exaggerated and ungraceful, and in colour hard and violent; it is painted in distemper, varnished; not in oils, as some have supposed.

Marcello Venusti was continually employed in executing small pictures from celebrated cartoons of Michael Angelo; and the diminutive size, and soft, neat, delicate execution, form a singular contrast with the sublimity of the composition and the grand massive drawing of the figures. One of these subjects is the Virgin seated at the foot of the Cross, holding on her lap the dead Redeemer, whose arms are supported by two angels: innumerable duplicates and engravings exist of this composition (one exquisite example is in the Queen's gallery in Buckingham Palace); also of the

33.—Marcello Venusti.

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34.—Sebastiano Lucini, called Fra Sebastian del Piombo.

From Vasari's History.

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Christ on the Cross, with the Virgin and St. John standing, and two angels looking out of the sky behind with an expression of intense anguish (one of these, a very fine example, was lately sold in the Lucca gallery). These two, the Pietà and the Crucifixion, were painted from drawings which he had made for Vittoria Colonna. Another is Il Silenzio, *The Silence*: the Virgin is represented with the infant Christ lying across her knee, with his arm hanging down; she has a book in one hand: behind her on one side is the young St. John in the panther's skin, with his finger on his lips; on the other, St. Joseph. The Annunciation, in which the figure of the Virgin is particularly majestic, is a fourth. Copies of these subjects, with trifling variations, are to be found in many galleries, and the engravings of all are in the British Museum.

SEBASTIAN DEL PIOMBO was another artist who painted under the direction and from the cartoons of Michael Angelo, and the most famous example of this union of talent is the Raising of Lazarus, in our National Gallery. "Sebastian," says Lanzi, "was without the gift of invention, and in compositions of many figures slow and irresolute;" but he was a consummate portrait painter and a most admirable colourist. A Venetian by birth, he had learned the art of colouring under Giorgione. On coming to Rome in 1518 he formed a close intimacy with Michael Angelo: the tradition is, that Michael Angelo associated Sebastiano with himself, and gave him the cartoons of his grand designs, to which the Venetian was to lend the magical hues of his palette, for the purpose of crushing Raphael. If this tradition be

true, the failure was signal and deserved; but luckily we are not *obliged* to believe it: it rests on no authority worthy of credit.

Giacopo Pontormo painted the Venus and Cupid now at Hampton Court, from a famous cartoon of Michael Angelo; and also a Leda, which is in the National Gallery, and of which the cartoon, by Michael Angelo, is in our Royal Academy.*

But the most celebrated and the most independent among the scholars and imitators of Michael Angelo was Daniel da Volterra, whose most famous work is the Taking down the Saviour from the Cross, with a number of figures full of energy and movement. It is in the church of the Monte di Trinità at Rome.

Giorgio Vasari was a pupil and especial favourite of Michael Angelo; he was a painter and architect of second-rate merit. He has, however, earned himself an immortality by his admirable biography of the painters, sculptors, and architects of Italy, from the earliest times to the death of Michael Angelo, whom he survived only ten years. A large picture by Vasari, representing the six great poets of Italy, is in the gallery of Mr. Hope.

It is not necessary to say anything here of the painters who, in the middle of the sixteenth century, and in the lifetime of Michael Angelo, imitated his manner; they were mere journeymen, and, indeed, imitated him most abominably; mistaking extravagance for sublimity, exaggeration for grandeur, and distortion and affectation for energy and passion:—a wretched set. But before we leave Florence we must speak of one more artist, whose

* The Leda is not exhibited in the National Gallery.

35.—Giacopo Carucci da Pontormo.

From Vasari's History

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36.—Daniele da Volterra (Ricciarelli).

From Vasari's History.

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37.—Giorgio Vasari.

Painted by himself.

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proper place is here, because he was a Florentine, and because he combined in a singular manner the characteristics of the three great men of whom we have last spoken—Lionardo da Vinci, Fra Bartolomeo, and Michael Angelo—without exactly imitating or equalling any one of them. This was Andrea del Sarto, a great artist; but who would have been a far greater artist had he been a better man.

ANDREA DEL SARTO.

BORN 1488, DIED 1530.

ANDREA VANNUCHI was the son of a tailor (in Italian *Sarto*); hence the appellation by which he was early known and has since become celebrated: he was born in 1478, and, like many others, began life as a goldsmith and chaser in metal, but soon turning his attention to painting, and studying indefatigably, he attained so much excellence that he was called in his own time "Andrea senza errori," that is, Andrea *the Faultless*. He is certainly one of the most fascinating of painters, but in all his pictures, even the finest, while we are struck by the elegance of the heads and the majesty of the figures, we feel the want of any real elevation of sentiment and expression. It would be difficult to point out any picture of Andrea del Sarto which has either simplicity or devotional feeling.

A man possessed of genius and industry, loving his art, and crowned with early fame and success, ought to have been through life a prosperous and a happy man. Andrea was neither:—he was miserable, unfortunate, and contemned, through his own fault or folly. He loved a beautiful woman of infamous character, who was the wife of a hatter; and on the death of her h s

38.—Andrea Vannucchi, called Andrea del Sarto.

From a Portrait by himself, in the Uffizi Gallery.

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band, in spite of her bad reputation and the warnings of his best friends, he married her: from that hour he never had a quiet heart, or home, or conscience. He had hitherto supported his old father and mother: she prevailed on him to forsake them. His friends stood aloof, pitying and despising his degradation. His scholars (and formerly the most promising of the young artists of that time had been emulous for the honour of his instructions) now fell off, unable to bear the detestable temper of the woman who governed his house. Tired of this existence, he accepted readily an invitation from Francis I., who, on his arrival at Paris, loaded him with favour and distinction; but after a time, his wife, finding she had no longer the same command over his purse or his proceedings, summoned him to return. He had entered into such engagements with Francis I. that this was not easy; but as he pleaded his domestic position, and promised, and even took an oath on the Gospel, that he would return in a few months, bringing with him his wife, the king gave him licence to depart, and even intrusted him with a large sum of money to be expended in certain specified objects.

Andrea hastened to Florence, and there, under the influence of his infamous wife, he embezzled the money, which was wasted in his own and her extravagance; and he never returned to France to keep his oath and engagements. But though he had been weak and wicked enough to commit this crime, he had sufficient sensibility to feel acutely the disgrace which was the consequence; it preyed on his mind and embittered the rest of his life. The avarice and infidelity of his wife

added to his sufferings. He continued to paint, however, and improved to the last in correctness of style and beauty of colour.

In the year 1530 he was attacked by a contagious disorder; abandoned on his deathbed by the woman to whom he had sacrificed honour, fame, and friends, he died miserably, and was buried, hastily and without the usual ceremonies of the Church, in the same convent of the Nunziata which he had adorned with his works.

Andrea del Sarto can only be estimated as a painter by those who have visited Florence. Fine as are his oil-pictures, his paintings in fresco are still finer. One of these, a Repose of the Holy Family, has been celebrated for the last two centuries under the title of the *Madonna del Sacco*, because Joseph is represented leaning on a sack. There are engravings of it in the British Museum. The cloisters of the convent of the Nunziata, containing scenes from the history of the Virgin Mary, and a court or cloister once belonging to the *Campagnia dello Scalzo*, painted with scenes from the life of John the Baptist (the tutelary saint of Florence), are his greatest works. His finest picture in oil is in the Florence Gallery, in the cabinet called the Tribune, where it hangs behind the Venus de' Medici. It represents the Virgin seated on a throne, with St. John the Baptist standing on one side, and St. Francis on the other; a picture of wonderful majesty and beauty. In general his Madonnas are not pleasing; they have, with great beauty, a certain vulgarity of expression, and in his groups he almost always places the Virgin on the ground, either kneeling or sitting. His only model for

all his females was his wife; and even when he did not paint from her, she so possessed his thoughts that unconsciously he repeated the same features in every face he drew, whether Virgin, or saint, or goddess. Pictures by Andrea del Sarto are to be found in almost all galleries, but *very* fine examples of his art are rare out of Florence. The picture in our National Gallery attributed to him is very unworthy of his reputation. Those at Hampton Court are not better. There is a fine portrait at Windsor, called the Gardener of the Duke of Florence, attributed to him, and a female head, a sketch full of nature and power. In the Louvre is the picture of Charity, No. 85, painted for Francis I. when Andrea was at Fontainebleau in 1518, and three others. Lord Westminster, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Munroe of Park Street, and Lord Cowper in his collection at Panshanger, possess the finest examples of Andrea del Sarto which are in England. At Panshanger there is a very fine portrait of Andrea del Sarto by himself; he is represented as standing by a table at which he has been writing, and looking up from the letter which lies before him: the figure is half-length, and the countenance noble, but profoundly melancholy. One might fancy that he had been writing to his wife.

RAPHAEL SANZIO D'URBINO.

BORN 1483, DIED 1520.

I HAVE spoken at length of two among the great men who influenced the progress of art in the beginning of the sixteenth century—Lionardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo. The third and greatest name was that of RAPHAEL.

In speaking of this wonderful man I shall be more diffuse and enter more into detail than usual. How can we treat in a small compass of him whose fame has filled the universe? In the history of Italian art he stands alone, like Shakspere in the history of our literature; and he takes the same kind of rank, a superiority not merely of degree, but of quality. Everybody has heard of RAPHAEL; every one has attached some associations of excellence and beauty, more or less defined, to that familiar name: but it is necessary to have studied profoundly the history of art, and to have an intimate acquaintance with the productions of contemporary and succeeding artists, to form any just idea of the wide and lasting influence exercised by this harmonious and powerful genius. His works have been an inexhaustible storehouse of ideas to painters and to poets. Everywhere in art we find his traces. Everywhere we

39.—Raphael Sanzio d' Urbino.

From a Portrait by himself, in the Uffizi Gallery.

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recognise his forms and lines, borrowed or stolen, reproduced, varied, imitated—never improved. Some critic once said, "Show me any sentiment or feeling in any poet, ancient or modern, and I will show you the same thing either as well or better expressed in Shakspere; in the same manner one might say, "Show me in any painter, ancient or modern, any especial beauty of form, expression, or sentiment, and in some picture, drawing, or print after Raphael, I will show you the same thing as well or better done, and *that* accomplished, which others have only sought or attempted." To complete our idea of this rare union of greatness and versatility as an artist with all that could grace and dignify the man, we must add such personal qualities as very seldom meet in the same individual—a bright, generous, genial, gentle spirit; the most attractive manners, the most winning modesty—

> "His heavenly face the mirror of his mind;
> His mind a temple for all lovely things
> To flock to, and inhabit"—

and we shall have a picture in our fancy more resembling that of an antique divinity, a young Apollo, than a real human being. There was a vulgar idea at one time prevalent that Raphael was a man of vicious and dissipated habits, and even died a victim to his excesses; this slander has been silenced for ever by indisputable evidence to the contrary, and now we may reflect with pleasure that nothing rests on surer evidence than the admirable qualities of Raphael; that no earthly renown was ever so unsullied by reproach, so justified by merit, so confirmed by concurrent opinion,

so established by time. The short life of Raphael was one of incessant and persevering study: he spent one-half of it in acquiring that practical knowledge and that mechanical dexterity of hand which were necessary before he could embody in forms and colours the rich creations of his wonderful mind; and when he died, at the age of thirty-seven, he left behind him two hundred and eighty-seven pictures and five hundred and seventy-six drawings and studies. If we reflect for one moment we must be convinced that such a man *could* not have been idle and dissipated: for we must always take into consideration that an excelling painter must be not only a poet in mind, but a ready and perfect artificer; and that, though nature may bestow the "genius and the faculty divine," only time, practice, assiduous industry, can give the exact and cunning hand. "An author," as Richardson observes, "must *think*, but it is no matter what character he writes; he has no care about that, if what he writes be legible. A curious mechanic's hand must be exquisite; but his thoughts may be at liberty:" while the painter must think and invent with his fancy, and what his fancy invents his hand must acquire the power to execute, or vain is his power of creative thought. It has been observed—though Raphael was unhappily an exception—that painters are generally long lived and healthy, and that, of all the professors of science and art, they are the least liable to alienation of mind or morbid effects of the brain. One reason may be, that through the union of the opposite faculties of the excursive fancy and mechanic skill—head and hand balancing each other—a sort of harmony

in their alternate or coefficient exercise is preserved habitually, which reacts on the whole moral and physical being. As Raphael carried to the highest perfection the union of those faculties of head and hand which constitute the complete artist, so this harmony pervaded his whole being, and nothing deformed or discordant could enter there. In all the portraits which exist of him, from infancy to manhood, there is a divine sweetness and repose; the little cherub face of three years old is not more serene and angelic than the same features at thirty. The child whom father and mother, guardian and stepmother, caressed and idolised in his loving innocence, was the same being whom we see in the prime of manhood subduing and reigning over all hearts, so that, to borrow the words of a contemporary, "not only all men, but the very brutes loved him:" the only very distinguished man of whom we read who lived and died without an enemy or a detractor!

Raphael Sanzio or Santi was born in the city of Urbino, on Good Friday in the year 1483. His father, Giovanni Santi, was a painter of no mean talent, who held a respectable rank in his native city, and was much esteemed by the Dukes Frederigo and Guidobaldo of Urbino, both of whom played a very important part in the history of Italy between 1474 and 1494. The name of Raphael's mother was Magia, and the house in which he was born is still standing, and regarded by the citizens of Urbino with just veneration. He was only eight years old when he lost his mother, but his father's second wife, Bernardina, well supplied her

place, and loved him and tended him as if he had been her own son. His father was his first instructor, and very soon the young pupil was not only able to assist him in his works, but showed such extraordinary talent that Giovanni deemed it right to give him the advantage of better teaching than his own. Perugino was the most celebrated master of that time, and Giovanni travelled to Perugia to make arrangements for placing Raphael under his care, but before these arrangements were completed this good father died, in August, 1494. His wishes were however carried into execution by his widow, and by his wife's brother, Simone Ciarla, and Raphael was sent to study under Perugino in 1495, being then twelve years old.

He remained in this school till he was nearly twenty, and was chiefly employed in assisting his master. A few pictures painted between his sixteenth and twentieth year have been authenticated by careful research, and are very interesting from being essentially characteristic. There is, of course, the manner of his master Perugino, but mingled with some of those qualities which were particularly his own, and which his after life developed into excellence; and nothing in these early pictures is so remarkable as the gradual improvement of his style, and his young predilection for his favourite subject, the Madonna and Child. The most celebrated of all his pictures painted in the school of Perugino was one representing the Marriage of the Virgin Mary to Joseph—a subject which is very common in Italian art, and called Lo Sposalizio (the Espousals). This beautiful picture is preserved in the Gallery

at Milan. There is a large and fine engraving of it by Longhi, which can be seen in any good print-shop. In the same year that he painted this picture (1504) Raphael visited Florence for the first time. He carried with him a letter of recommendation from Giovanna, Duchess of Sora and sister of the Duke of Urbino, to Soderini, who had succeeded the exiled Medici in the government of Florence. In this letter the duchess styles him "a discreet and amiable youth," to whom she was attached for his father's sake and for his own good qualities, and she requests that Soderini will favour and aid him in his pursuits. Raphael did not remain long at Florence in this first visit, but he made the acquaintance of Fra Bartolomeo and Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, and saw some cartoons by Liornardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo, which filled his mind with new and bold ideas both of form and composition. In the following year he was employed in executing several large pictures for various churches at Perugia. One of these, a large altarpiece, painted for the church of the Servite, is now at Blenheim: it is full of beauty and dignity; beneath it was a little picture of St. John preaching in the Wilderness, which is in the possession of Lord Lansdowne. The Blenheim altarpiece has lately been engraved in a perfect style by Louis Gruner. It represents the enthroned Virgin and Child, with John the Baptist and St. Nicholas. About the same time he painted for himself a lovely little miniature called the Dream of the Young Knight, in which he represents a youth armed, who sees in a vision two female figures, one alluring him to pleasure, the other, with a

book and sword, inviting him to study and to strive for excellence. It is now in the National Gallery: this also has been engraved in an exquisite style by Gruner.

When he had finished these and other works he returned to Florence, and remained there till 1508. Some of his finest works may be referred to this period of his life, that is, before he was five-and-twenty.

One of these is the Madonna sitting under the Palm-tree, while Joseph presents flowers to the infant Christ. This may be seen in the Bridgewater Gallery. A second is the Madonna in the possession of Earl Cowper, and now at Panshanger. Another is the famous Madonna in the Florentine Gallery, called the Madonna del Cardellino (the Virgin of the Goldfinch), because the little St. John is presenting a goldfinch to the infant Christ. Another, as famous, now in the Louvre, called La Belle Jardinière, because the Madonna is seated in a garden amid flowers, with Christ standing at her knee. The St. Catherine in our National Gallery was also painted about the same period; and the little picture of St. George and the Dragon, which Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino, sent as a present to Henry VII., and which is now at St. Petersburg. In this picture St. George is armed with a lance, and has the Garter round his knee, with the inscription "Honi soit qui mal y pense." There is another little St. George in the Louvre, in which the saint is about to slay the dragon with a sword. And there are besides two or three large altarpieces and some beautiful portraits; in all about thirty pictures painted during the three years he spent at Florence.

In his twenty-fifth year, when Fra Bartolomeo, Lio-

nardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo were all at the height of their fame, and many years older than himself, the young Raphael had already become celebrated from one end of Italy to the other. At this time Julius II. was pope. Of his extraordinary and energetic character I have already spoken at length in the Life of Michael Angelo. At the age of seventy he was revolving plans for the aggrandizement of his power and the embellishment of the Vatican, which it would have taken a long life to realise; conscious that the time before him was to be measured by months rather than by years, and ambitious to concentrate in his own person all the glory that must ensue from such magnificent works, he listened to no obstacles, he would endure no delays, he spared no expense in his undertakings. Bramante, the greatest architect, and Michael Angelo, the greatest sculptor in Italy, were already in his service. Lionardo da Vinci was then employed in public works at Florence, and could not be engaged, and he therefore sent for Raphael to undertake the decoration of those halls in the Vatican which Popes Nicholas V. and Sixtus IV. had begun and left unfinished. The invitation, or rather order, of the pope was as usual so urgent and so peremptory, that Raphael hurried from Florence, leaving his friends Bartolomeo and Ghirlandajo to complete his unfinished pictures, and immediately on his arrival at Rome he commenced the greatest of his works, the Chambers (*Camere*) of the Vatican.

In general, when Raphael undertook any great work illustrative of sacred or profane history, he did not hesitate to ask advice of his learned and literary friends

on points of costume or chronology: but when he began his paintings in the Vatican he was wholly unassisted, and the plan which he laid before the pope, and which was immediately approved and adopted, shows that the grasp and cultivation of his mind equalled his powers as a painter. He dedicated this first saloon, called in Italian the Camera della Segnatura, to the glory of those high intellectual pursuits which may be said to embrace in some form or other all human culture—he represented Theology, Poetry, Philosophy, and Jurisprudence.

And first on the ceiling he painted in four circles four allegorical female figures with characteristic symbols, throned amid clouds, and attended by beautiful genii. Of these the figure of Poetry is distinguished by superior grandeur and inspiration. Beneath these figures and on the four sides of the room he painted four great pictures, each about fifteen feet high by twenty or twenty-five feet wide, the subjects illustrating historically the four allegorical figures above. Under Theology he placed the composition improperly called *La Disputa del Sacramento*, which represents rather the whole system of Revelation, like a grand poem combining heaven and earth. In the upper part is the heavenly glory, the Redeemer in the centre, beside him the Virgin-mother. On the right and left, arranged in a semicircle, patriarchs, apostles, and saints, all seated; all full of character, dignity, and a kind of celestial repose befitting their beatitude. Angels are hovering round: four of them, surrounding the emblematic Dove, hold the Gospels. In the lower half of the picture are assembled the celebrated doctors and teachers

of the Church, grand, solemn, meditative figures; some searching their books, some lost in thought, some engaged in colloquy sublime. And on each side, a little lower, groups of disciples and listeners, every head and figure a study of character and expression, all different, all full of nature, animation, and significance: and thus the two parts of this magnificent composition, the heavenly beatitude above, the mystery of faith below, combine into one comprehensive whole. This picture contains about fifty full-length figures.

Under Poetry we have Mount Parnassus. Apollo and the Muses are seen on the summit. On one side, near them, the epic and tragic poets Homer, Virgil, Dante. (Ariosto had not written his poem at this time, and Milton and Tasso were yet unborn.) Below, on each side, are the lyrical poets Petrarch, Sappho, Corinna, Pindar, Horace. The arrangement, grouping, and character are most admirable and graceful; but Raphael's original design for this composition, as we have it engraved by Marc Antonio, is finer than the fresco, in which there are many alterations which cannot be considered as improvements.

Under Philosophy he has placed the School of Athens. It represents a grand hall or portico, in which a flight of steps separates the foreground from the background. Conspicuous, and above the rest, are the elder intellectual philosophers, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates; Plato characteristically pointing upwards to heaven; Aristotle pointing to the earth; Socrates impressively discoursing to the listeners near him. Then, on a lower plan, we have the Sciences and Arts, represented by Pythagoras

and Archimedes; Zoroaster, and Ptolemy the geographer; while alone, as if avoiding and avoided by all, sits Diogenes the Cynic. Raphael has represented the art of painting by the figure of his master Perugino, and has introduced a portrait of himself humbly following him. The group of Archimedes (whose head is a portrait of Bramante the architect) surrounded by his scholars, who are attentively watching him as he draws a geometrical figure, is one of the finest things which Raphael ever conceived, and the whole composition has in its regularity and grandeur a variety and dramatic vivacity which relieve it from all formality. This picture also contains not less than fifty figures.

Law, or Jurisprudence, from the particular construction of the wall on which the subject is painted, is represented with less completeness, and is broken up into divisions. Prudence, Fortitude, and Temperance are above; below, on one side, is Pope Gregory delivering the ecclesiastical law; and on the other, Justinian promulgating his famous code of civil law.

The whole decoration of this chamber forms a grand allegory of the domain of human intellect, shadowed forth in creations of surpassing beauty and dignity. The description here given is necessarily brief and imperfect. The reader should consult the engravings of these frescoes, and with the above explanation they will probably be intelligible; at all events, the wonderfully prolific genius of the painter will be appreciated, in the number of the personages introduced and the appropriate characters of each.

About this time Raphael painted that portrait of

Julius II. of which a duplicate is in our National Gallery. No one who has studied the history of this extraordinary old man, and his relations with Michael Angelo and Raphael, can look upon it without interest. The original is in the Pitti Palace at Florence.

Also at this time Raphael painted the portrait of himself which is preserved in the Gallery of Painters at Florence; it represents him as a very handsome young man with luxuriant hair and dark eyes, full lips, and a pensive yet benign countenance.* To this period we may also refer a number of beautiful Madonnas: Lord Garvagh's, called the Aldobrandini Madonna; the Virgin of the Bridgewater Gallery; the Vierge au Diadème in the Louvre; and the yet more famous Madonna di Foligno, now at Rome in the Vatican.

While employed for Pope Julius in executing the frescoes already described, Raphael found a munificent friend and patron in Agostino Chigi, a rich banker and merchant who was then living at Rome in great splendour. He painted several pictures for him: the four Sibyls in the chapel of the Chigi family, in the church of Santa Maria della Pace, sublime figures, full of grandeur and inspiration; and, on the wall of a chamber in his palace, now called the *Farnesina*, that elegant fresco the Triumph of Galatea, well known from the numerous engravings.

About the year 1510 Raphael began the decoration of the second chamber of the Vatican. In this series of

* There is an engraving by Pontius. The head engraved by Raphael Morghen as the portrait of Raphael is now considered to be the portrait of Bindo Altoviti. It is at Munich.

compositions he represented the power and glory of the Church and her miraculous deliverances from her secular enemies: all these being an indirect honour paid to, or rather claimed by, Julius II., who made it a subject of pride that he had not only expelled all enemies from the Papal territories, but also enlarged their boundaries—by no scrupulous means. On the ceiling of this room are four beautiful pictures—the promises of God to the four Patriarchs, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, and Moses. On the four side walls, the Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple at Jerusalem; the Miracle of Bolsena, by which, as it was said, heretics were silenced; Attila, King of the Huns, terrified by the apparition of St. Peter and St. Paul; and St. Peter delivered from Prison. Of these the Heliodorus is one of the grandest and most poetical of all Raphael's creations: the group of the celestial warrior trampling on the prostrate Heliodorus, with the avenging spirits rushing, floating along, air-borne, to scourge the despoiler, is wonderful for its supernatural power: it is a vision of beauty and terror.

Before this chamber was finished Julius II. died, and was succeeded by Leo X. in 1513.

Though the character of Pope Leo X. was in all respects different from that of Julius, he was not less a patron of Raphael than his predecessor had been, and certainly the number of learned and accomplished men whom he attracted to his court, and the enthusiasm for classical learning which prevailed among them, strongly influenced those productions of Raphael which date from the accession of Leo. They became more and

more allied to the antique, and less and less embued with that pure religious spirit which we find in his earlier works.

Cardinal Bembo, Cardinal Bibiena, Count Castiglione, the poets Ariosto and Sanazzaro, ranked at this time among Raphael's intimate friends. With his celebrity his riches increased; he built himself a fine house in that part of Rome called the Borgo, between St. Peter's and the Castle of St. Angelo; he had numerous scholars from all parts of Italy, who attended on him with a love and reverence and duty far beyond the lip and knee homage which waits on princes; and such was the influence of his benign and genial temper, that all these young men lived in the most entire union and friendship with him and with each other, and his school was never disturbed by those animosities and jealousies which before and since have disgraced the schools of art in Italy. All the other painters of that time were the friends rather than the rivals of the supreme and gentle Raphael, with the single exception of Michael Angelo.

About the period at which we are now arrived, the beginning of the pontificate of Leo X., Michael Angelo had left Rome for Florence, as it has been related in his Life. Lionardo da Vinci came to Rome, by the invitation of Leo, attended by a train of scholars, and lived on good terms with Raphael, who treated the venerable old man with becoming deference. Fra Bartolomeo also visited Rome about 1513, to the great joy of his friend. We find Raphael at this time on terms of the tenderest friendship with Francia, and in correspondence

with Albert Durer, for whom he entertained the highest admiration.

Under Leo X. Raphael continued his great works in the Vatican. He began the third hall or *camera* in 1515. The ceiling of this chamber had been painted by his master Perugino for Sixtus IV.; and Raphael, from a feeling of respect for his old master, would not remove or paint over his work. On the sides of the room he represented the principal events in the lives of Pope Leo III. and Pope Leo IV., shadowing forth under their names the glory of his patron Leo X. Of these pictures, the most remarkable is that which is called in Italian l'Incendio del Borgo (the Fire in the Borgo). The story says that this populous part of Rome was on fire in the time of Leo IV., and that the conflagration was extinguished by a miracle. In the hurry, confusion, and tumult of the scene; in the men escaping half naked; in the terrified groups assembled in the foreground; in the women carrying water; we find every variety of attitude and emotion, expressed with a perfect knowledge of form; and some of the figures exhibit the influence of Michael Angelo's ceiling of the Sistine Chapel already described. This fresco, though so fine in point of drawing, is the worst *coloured* of the whole series; the best in point of colour are the Heliodorus and the Miracle of Bolsena.

The last of the chambers in the Vatican is the Hall of Constantine, painted with scenes from the life of that emperor. The whole of these frescoes having been executed by the scholars of Raphael, from his designs and cartoons, we shall not dwell on them here, only ob-

serving that an excellent reduced copy of the finest of all, the Battle of Constantine and Maxentius, may be seen at Hampton Court. It is attributed to Giulio Romano.

While Raphael, assisted by his scholars, was designing and executing the large frescoes in the Vatican, he was also engaged in many other works. His fertile mind and ready hand were never idle, and the number of *original* creations of this wonderful man, and the rapidity with which they succeeded each other, are quite unexampled. Among his most celebrated and popular compositions is the series of subjects from the Old Testament, called 'Raphael's Bible;' these were comparatively small pictures adorning the thirteen cupolas of the "Loggie" of the Vatican. These "Loggie" are open galleries running round three sides of an open court; and the gallery on the second story is the one painted under Raphael's direction. Up the sides and round the windows are arabesque ornaments, festoons of fruit, flowers, animals, all combined and grouped together with the most exquisite and playful fancy; they have been much injured by time, yet more by the barbarous treatment of the French soldiery when Rome was sacked in 1527, and worst of all by unskilful attempts at restoration. The pictures in the cupolas, being out of reach, are better preserved. Sacred subjects were never represented in so beautiful, so poetical, and so intelligible a manner as by Raphael; but as the copies and engravings of these works are innumerable and easily met with, I shall not enter into a particular description of them; very good copies of several may

be seen at the National School of Design at Kensington.*

There was still another great work for the Vatican intrusted to Raphael. The interior of the Sistine Chapel had been ornamented round the lower walls with paintings in imitation of tapestries. Leo X. resolved to substitute real draperies of the most costly material; and Raphael was to furnish the subjects and drawings, which were to be copied in the looms of Flanders, and worked in a mixture of wool, silk, and gold. Thus originated the famous CARTOONS OF RAPHAEL.

They were originally eleven in number, to fit the ten compartments into which the wall was divided by as many pilasters, and the space over the altar. Eight were large, one larger than the rest, and two small. Of the eleven cartoons designed by Raphael, four are lost, and seven remain, which are now removed to the South Kensington Museum from Hampton Court. As they rank among the greatest productions of art, and are freely thrown open to the public, I shall give a detailed account of them here from various sources,† and add

* A set of excellent engravings from the series, in a fine free style, and of a large size, and all executed at Rome after the original frescoes, was published by Parker in the Strand, at the extraordinarily low price of six engravings for nine shillings. The subjects, the size, and the fine taste of the execution, render them admirable ornaments for the walls of a school-room or study.

† See Passavant's 'Rafael;' Kugler's 'Handbuch;' Bunsen's 'Stadt Rom;' Murray's 'Handbook to the Public Galleries of Art;' and a very clever account of the Cartoons which appeared in the 'Penny Magazine' some years ago. From all these works extracts have been freely taken, and put together so as to form a correct and complete description both of the Cartoons and the Tapestries.

some remarks which may enable the uninitiated to form a judgment of their characteristic merits.*

The intention in the whole series of subjects was to express the mission, the sufferings, and the triumph of the Christian Church. The Death of the First Martyr, and the acts of the two great Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, were ranged along the sides to the right and left of the high altar; while over the altar was the Coronation of the Virgin, a subject which, as I have already observed, was always symbolical of the triumph of religion. In the original arrangement the tapestries hung in the following order:†—

On the left of the altar—1. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes (*i. e.* the Calling of Peter); 2. The Charge to Peter; 3. The Stoning of Stephen; 4. The Healing of the Lame Man; 5. The Death of Ananias.

On the right of the altar—1. The Conversion of St. Paul; 2. Elymus struck Blind; 3. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra; 4. Paul preaching at Athens; 5. Paul in Prison. All along underneath ran a rich border in chiaroscuro, of a bronze colour, relieved with gold, representing on a smaller scale incidents in the life of Leo X., with ornamental arabesques, groups of sporting genii, fruits, flowers, &c.; and the pilasters between the tapestries were also adorned with rich arabesques. Old engravings exist of some of these designs, which are among the most beautiful things in Italian art; as full

* At this time (1858) a series of photographs has been taken from the Cartoons.

† Subsequently, when the whole of the wall was painted by Michael Angelo with the Last Judgment, this order was changed, and the tapestry of the Crowning of the Virgin entirely removed.

of grandeur and grace as they are exquisitely fanciful and luxuriant.

The large cartoons of this series which are lost are, the Stoning of Stephen; the Conversion of St. Paul; Paul in his Dungeon at Philippi; and the Crowning of the Virgin.

The seven which remain to us are arranged at Hampton Court without any regard either to their original arrangement or to chronological order. Beginning at the door by which we enter, they succeed each other thus:—

1. The Death of Ananias.

"Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."—*Acts* v.

Nine of the Apostles stand together on a raised platform; St. Peter in the midst, with uplifted hands, is in the act of speaking; on the right Ananias lies prostrate on the earth, while a young man and woman, on the left, are starting back, with ghastly horror and wonder in every feature; in the background, to the left, is seen Sapphira, who, unaware of the catastrophe of her husband and the terrible fate impending over her, is paying some money with one hand, while she withholds some in the other; St. John and another Apostle are on the left, distributing alms. The figures are altogether twenty-four in number. Size, seventeen feet six inches by eleven feet four inches.

As a composition, considered artistically, this cartoon holds the first place; nothing has ever exceeded it: only Raphael himself, in some of his other works, has equalled it in the wondrous adaptation of the means employed to

the end in view. By the circular arrangement of the composition, and by elevating the figures behind above those in front, the whole of the personages on the scene are brought at once to sight. The elevated position of Peter and James, though standing back from the foreground, and their dignified figures, contrast strongly with the abject form of Ananias, struck down by the hand of God, helpless, and, as it seems, quivering in every limb. Those of the spectators who are near Ananias express their horror and astonishment by the most various and appropriate expression.

"He falls," says Hazlitt, "so naturally, that it seems as if a person could fall no other way; and yet, of all the ways in which a human figure could fall, it is probably the most expressive of a person overwhelmed by, and in the grasp of, Divine vengeance. This is in some measure the secret of Raphael's success. Most painters, in studying an attitude, puzzle themselves to find out what will be picturesque, and what will be fine, and never discover it. Raphael only thought how a person would stand or fall under such or such circumstances, and the picturesque and the fine followed as a matter of course. Hence the unaffected force and dignity of his style, which are only another name for truth and nature under impressive and momentous circumstances."

We have here an instance of that truly Shaksperian art by which Raphael always softens and heightens the effect of tragic terror. St. John, at the very instant when this awful judgment has fallen on the hypocrite

and unbeliever, has benignly turned to bestow alms and a blessing on the poor good man before him.*

2. Elymas the Sorcerer struck with Blindness.

"And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand."—*Acts* xiii. 11.

The Proconsul Sergius, seated on his throne, beholds with astonishment Elymas struck blind by the word of the Apostle Paul, who stands on the left; an attendant is gazing with wonder in his face, while eight persons behind him are all occupied with the miraculous event which is passing before their eyes; two lictors are on the left; in all fourteen figures. Size, fourteen feet seven inches by eleven feet four inches.

This cartoon, as a composition, is particularly remarkable for the concentration of the effect and interest in the one action. The figure of St. Paul is magnificent; while the crouching abject form of Elymas, groping his way, and blind even to his finger-ends, stands in the midst, and on him all eyes are bent.† The manner in

* "It has been questioned whether the woman who is advancing from behind was meant for Sapphira, as it is stated in the sacred record that three hours had elapsed after the death of Ananias before she entered the place. Notwithstanding this objection, it is most probable that Raphael intended this figure for the wife of Ananias; and the slight inaccuracy is more than atoned for by the sublime moral, which shows the woman approaching the spot where her husband had met his doom, and where her own death awaits her, but wholly unconscious of those judgments, and absorbed in counting that gold by which both she and her partner had been betrayed to their fate."

† A story is told of Garrick objecting to the truth of this action in the hearing of Benjamin West, who, in vindication of the painter,

which the impression is graduated from terror down to indifferent curiosity, while one person explains the event to another by means of gesture, are among the most spirited dramatic effects Raphael ever produced.

3. THE HEALING OF THE LAME MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE OF THE TEMPLE.

"Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have I give unto thee. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up."—*Acts* iii. 6, 7.

Under the portico of the Temple of Jerusalem stand the two Apostles Peter and John; the former is holding by the hand a miserable deformed cripple, who gazes up in his face with joyful, eager wonder; another cripple is seen on the left. Among the people are seen conspicuous a woman with an infant in her arms, and another leading two naked boys, one of whom is carrying two doves as an offering. The wreathed and richly adorned columns are imitated from those which have been preserved for ages in the church of St. Peter as relics of the Temple of Jerusalem. With regard to the composition, Raphael has been criticised for breaking it up into parts by the introduction of the pillars; yet, if properly considered, this very management is a proof of the exquisite taste of the painter, and his attention to the object he had in view. Adhering to the sense of the passage in Scripture, he could not make all the figures refer to one principal action, the healing of the cripple; he has there

desired Garrick to shut his eyes and walk across the room, when he instantly stretched out his hand, and began to feel his way with the exact attitude and expression here represented.

fore framed it in a manner between the two columns; and by the groups introduced into the other two divisions he has intimated that the people were entering the temple "at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour." It is evident, moreover, that had the shafts been perfectly straight, according to the severest law of good taste in architecture, the effect would have been extremely disagreeable to the eye; by their winding form they harmonise with the manifold forms of the moving figures around, and they illustrate, by their elaborate elegance, the Scripture phrase, "the gate which is called Beautiful." The misery, the distortion, the ugliness of the cripple, are made as striking as possible, and contrasted with the noble head and form of St. Peter and the benign features of St. John. The figure of the young woman with her child is a model of feminine sweetness and grace; it is eminently, perfectly Raphaelesque, stamped with his peculiar sentiment and refinement. The bright open sky seen between the interstices of the columns harmonises with the lightness, cheerfulness, and happy expression of these figures. In the compartment where the miracle is taking place there is the same correspondence of effect with sentiment; the subdued light of the lamps burning in the depth of the recess accords well with the reverential feeling excited by the sacred transaction. Many parts of this cartoon have unfortunately been injured, and much of the harmony destroyed, yet it remains one of the most wonderful relics of art now extant.

4. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.

"When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—*Luke* v. 8.

On the left Christ is seated in a bark, in the act of speaking to St. Peter, who has fallen on his knees before him; behind him is a youth, and a second bark is on the right. Two men are busied drawing up the nets miraculously laden, while a third steers. On the shore, in the foreground, stand three cranes; and in the distance are seen the people to whom Christ had been preaching out of the ship or boat. In this cartoon the composition is very beautiful; and the execution, from its mingled delicacy, power, and precision, is supposed to be almost entirely from Raphael's own hand. The effect is wonderfully bright. In the broad clear daylight, and against the sky, the figures stand out in strong relief. The clear lake ripples round the bark, and the figure of the Saviour, in the pale blue vest and white mantle, appears all light, and radiant with beneficence. The awe, humility, and love in the attitude and countenance of St. Peter are wonderfully expressive. The masterly drawing in the figures of the Apostles in the second boat conveys most strongly the impression of the weight they are attempting to raise. In the fish and the cranes, all painted with exquisite and minute fidelity to nature, we trace the hand of Giovanni da Udine. These strange black birds have here a grand effect. "There is a certain sea-wildness about them, and, as their food was fish, they contribute mightily to express the affair in hand: they are a fine part of the scene. They serve also to prevent the heaviness which that part would

otherwise have had, by breaking the parallel lines which would have been made by the boats and base of the picture." *

5. Paul and Barnabas at Lystra.

"Then the priest of Jupiter which was before their city brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people, which when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of, they rent their clothes."—*Acts* xiv. 13, 14.

On the left Paul and Barnabas are standing beneath a portico, and appear to recoil from the intention of the

* "A painter is allowed sometimes to depart even from natural and historical truth. Thus, in the cartoon of the Draught of Fishes, Raphael has made a boat too little to hold the figures he has placed in it; and this is so visible that some are apt to triumph over that great man, as having nodded on that occasion, while others have pretended to excuse it by saying it was done to make the miracle appear greater; but the truth is, had he made the boat large enough for those figures, his picture would have been all boat, which would have had a disagreeable effect; and to have made his figures small enough for a vessel of that size would have rendered them unsuitable to the rest of the set, and have made those figures appear less considerable. It is amiss as it is, but would have been worse any other way, as it frequently happens in other cases. Raphael, therefore, wisely chose this losses inconvenience, this seeming error, which he knew the judicious world know was none; and for the rest, he was above being solicitous for his reputation with them. So that, upon the whole, this is so far from being a fault, that it is an instance of the consummate judgment of that most incomparable man, which he learned in his great school, the antique, where this liberty is commonly taken in an eminent manner in the Trajan and Antoninian columns, and on many other occasions, in the finest bas-reliefs. And to note it, by the by, it seems to be a strange rashness and self-sufficiency in a spectator or a reader when he thinks he sees an absurdity in a great author to take it immediately for granted it is such. Surely it is a most reasonable and just prejudice in favour of a man we have always known to act with wisdom and propriety on every occasion, to suspend at least our criticism, and cast off illiberal triumph over him, and to suppose it at least possible that he might have had reasons that we are not aware of."—*Richardson*, p. 27.

townsmen to offer sacrifice to them; the first is rending his garment and rebuking a man who is bringing a ram to be offered. On the right, near the centre, is seen a group of the people bringing forward two oxen; a man is raising an axe to strike one of them down; his arm is held back by a youth who, having observed the abhorrent gesture of Paul, judges that the sacrifice will be offensive to him. In the foreground appears the cripple, no longer so, who is clasping his hands with an expression of gratitude; his crutches lie useless at his feet; an old man, raising part of his dress, gazes with a look of astonishment on the restored limbs. In the background, the forum of Lystra, with several temples. Towards the centre is seen a statue of Mercury, in allusion to the words in the text: "And they called Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker."

As a composition this cartoon is an instance of the consummate skill with which Raphael has contrived to bring together a variety of circumstances so combined as to make the story perfectly intelligible as a passing scene, linking it at the same time with the past and the succeeding time. We have the foregone moment in the appearance of the healed cripple, and the wonder he excites; in the furious looks directed against the apostles by some of the spectators we see foreshadowed the persecution which immediately followed this act of mistaken adoration. Every part of the grouping, the figures, the heads, both in drawing and expression, are wonderful, and have an infusion of the antique and classical spirit most proper to the subject. The sacrificial group of the ox, with the figure holding its head

and the man lifting the axe, was taken from a Roman bas-relief, which in Raphael's time was in the Villa Medici, and the idea varied and adapted to his purpose with infinite skill. The boys piping at the altar are full of beauty, and most gracefully contrasted in character. The whole is full of movement and interest.

6. ST. PAUL PREACHING AT ATHENS.

"Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To the unknown God."—*Acts* xvii. 22, 23.

Paul, standing on some elevated steps, is preaching to the Athenians in the Areopagus; behind him are three philosophers of the different sects, the Cynic, the Epicurean, and the Platonic; beyond, a group of sophists disputing among each other. On the right are seen the half-figures of Dionysius the Areopagite and the woman Damaris, of whom it is expressly said that they "believed and clave unto him." On the same side, in the background, is seen the statue of Mars, in front of a circular temple. In point of pictorial composition this cartoon is one of the finest in the series. St. Paul, elevated above his auditors, grandly dignified in bearing, as one divinely inspired, lofty in stature and position, "stands like a tower." This figure of St. Paul has been imitated from the fresco by Filippino Lippi, in the Carmine at Florence. There Paul is represented as visiting St. Peter in prison; one arm only is raised, the forefinger pointing upward; he is speaking words of consolation to him through the grated bars of his dungeon, behind which appears the form of St. Peter. Raphael has taken

the idea of the figure, raised the two arms, and given the whole an air of inspired energy wanting in the original. The persons who surround him are not to be considered a mere promiscuous assemblage of individuals: among them several figures may each be said to personify a class, and the different sects of Grecian philosophy may be easily distinguished. Here the Cynic, revolving deeply, and fabricating objections; there the Stoic, leaning on his staff, giving a steady but scornful attention, and fixed in obstinate incredulity; there the disciples of Plato, not conceding a full belief, but pleased at least with the beauty of the doctrine, and listening with gratified attention. Farther on is a promiscuous group of disputants, sophists, and free-thinkers, engaged in vehement discussion, but apparently more bent on exhibiting their own ingenuity than anxious to elicit truth or acknowledge conviction. At a considerable distance in the background are seen two doctors of the Jewish law. The varied groups, the fine thinking heads among the auditors, the expression of curiosity, reflection, doubt, conviction, faith, as revealed in the different countenances and attitudes, are all as fine as possible: particularly the man who has wrapped his robe around him, and appears buried in thought. "This figure also is borrowed from a fresco in the Carmine. The closed eyes, which in the fresco might be easily mistaken for sleeping, are not in the least ambiguous in the cartoon; the eyes indeed are closed, but they are closed with such vehemence that the agitation of a mind perplexed in the extreme is seen at the first glance. But what is most extraordinary,

and I think particularly to be admired, is that the same idea is continued through the whole figure, even to the drapery, which is so closely muffled about him that even his hands are not seen; by this happy correspondence between the expression of the countenance and the disposition of the parts, the figure appears to think from head to foot." *

7. THE CHARGE TO ST. PETER.

"Feed my sheep."—*Acts* xxi. 16.

Christ is standing and pointing with the right hand to a flock of sheep; his left hand is extended towards Peter, who, holding the key, kneels at his feet. The other ten apostles stand behind him, listening with various gestures and expression to the words of the Saviour. In the background a landscape, and on the right the Lake of Gennesareth and a fisher's bark. In the tapestry the white robe of our Saviour is strewed with golden stars, which has a beautiful effect, and doubtless existed in the cartoon, though no trace of this is now visible.

As the transaction here represented took place between Christ and St. Peter only, there was little room for dramatic effect. Richardson praises the introduction of the sheep, as the only means of making the incident intelligible; but I agree with Dr. Waagen that herein Raphael has perhaps, in avoiding one error, fallen into another, and, not able to give us the real meaning of the words, has turned into a palpable object what was

* Sir Joshua Reynold

merely a figurative expression, and thus produced an ambiguity of another and of a more unpleasant kind.

The figure of Christ is wonderfully noble in conception and treatment; the heads of the apostles finely diversified; in some we see only affectionate acquiescence, duteous submission; in others wonder, displeasure, and jealous discontent. The figures of the apostles are in the cartoon happily relieved from each other by variety of local tint, which cannot be given in a print, and hence the heavy effect of the composition when studied through the engraving only.

These are the subjects of the famous Cartoons of Raphael. To describe the effect of the light and sketchy treatment, so easy and yet so large and grand in style, I shall borrow the words of an eloquent writer.

"Compared with these," says Hazlitt, as finely as truly, "all other pictures look like oil and varnish; we are stopped and attracted by the colouring, the pencilling, the finishing, the instrumentalities of art; but *here* the painter seems to have flung his mind upon the canvas. His thoughts, his great ideas alone, prevail; there is nothing between us and the subject; we look through a frame and see Scripture histories, and are made actual spectators in miraculous events. Not to speak it profanely, they are a sort of a revelation of the subjects of which they treat; there is an ease and freedom of manner about them which brings preternatural characters and situations home to us with the familiarity of every-day occurrences; and while the figures fill, raise, and satisfy the mind, they seem to have cost the

painter nothing. Everywhere else we see the means, here we arrive at the end apparently without any means. There is a spirit at work in the divine creation before us; we are unconscious of any steps taken, of any progress made; we are aware only of comprehensive results—of whole masses of figures: the sense of power supersedes the appearance of effort. It is as if we had ourselves seen these persons and things at some former state of our being, and that the drawing certain lines upon coarse paper by some unknown spell brought back the entire and living images, and made them pass before us, palpable to thought, feeling, sight. Perhaps not all this is owing to genius; something of this effect may be ascribed to the simplicity of the vehicle employed in embodying the story, and something to the decaying and dilapidated state of the pictures themselves. They are the more majestic for being in ruins. We are struck chiefly with the truth of proportion, and the range of conception—all made spiritual. The corruptible has put on incorruption; and, amidst the wreck of colour and the mouldering of material beauty, nothing is left but a universe of thought, or the broad imminent shadows of 'calm contemplation and majestic pains.'"

It is matter of regret, but hardly of surprise, that the cartoons have never yet been adequately engraved. The first complete series which appeared was by Simon Gribelin, a French engraver, who came over in 1680, and was published in the reign of Queen Anne. The prints are small neat memoranda of the compositions, nothing more.

The second set was executed by Sir Nicholas Dorigny,

who undertook the work under the patronage of the government, and presented to the king, George I., in 1719, two sets of the finished engravings, on which occasion the king bestowed on him a purse of one hundred guineas, and, at the request of the Duke of Devonshire, knighted him. These engravings are large, and tolerably but coarsely executed, and are preferred by connoisseurs; but on the whole they are poor as works of art.

The set of large engravings by Thomas Holloway was begun by him in 1800, and was not quite completed at his death in 1826. These engravings have been praised for the "finished and elaborate style in which they have been executed," and they deserve this praise; but, as transcripts of the cartoons, they are altogether false in point of style. They are too metallic, too mechanical, too laboured: a set of masterly etchings would better convey an impression of the slight free execution, the spiritual ease of the originals. These engravings give one the idea of being done from highly finished, deeply coloured oil-pictures.

Since 1837 a large set has been commenced by John Burnett, in a mixed, rather coarse style, but effective and spirited: they are sold at a cheap rate.

Lastly, a set of photographs has been recently published (1858).

Raphael finished these cartoons in 1516. They are all from fourteen to eighteen feet in length, and about twelve feet high; the figures above life size, drawn with chalk upon strong paper, and coloured in distemper. He received for his designs four hundred and thirty-four gold ducats (about 650*l.*), which were paid to him, three

hundred on the 15th of June, 1515, and one hundred and thirty-four in December, 1516. The rich tapestries worked from these cartoons, in wool, silk, and gold, were completed at Arras, and sent to Rome in 1519. For these the Pope paid to the manufacturer at Arras fifty thousand gold ducats; they were exhibited for the first time on St. Stephen's Day, December 26, 1519. Raphael had the satisfaction, before he died, of seeing them hung in their places, and of witnessing the wonder and applause they excited through the whole city. Their subsequent fate was very curious and eventful. In the sack of Rome, in 1527, they were carried away by the French soldiery; but were restored in 1553, during the reign of Pope Julius III., by the Duc de Montmorenci, all but the piece which represented the Coronation of the Virgin, which is supposed to have been burned for the sake of the gold thread. Again, in 1798, they made part of the French spoliations, and were actually sold to a Jew at Leghorn, who burnt one of them for the purpose of extracting the precious metal contained in the threads. As it was found, however, to furnish very little, the proprietor judged it better to allow the others to retain their original shape, and they were soon afterwards repurchased from him by the agents of Pius VII., and reinstated in the galleries of the Vatican. Several sets of tapestries were worked from the cartoons: one was sent as a present to Henry VIII., and after the death of Charles I. sold into Spain; another or the same set was exhibited in London a few years ago, and has since been sold to the King of Prussia. At present these tapestries are hung in the Museum at Berlin.

While all Rome was indulging in ecstasies over the rich and dearly paid tapestries, which were not *then*, and are still less *now*, worth one of the cartoons, these precious productions of the artist's own mind were lying in the warehouse of the weaver at Arras, neglected and forgotten. Some were torn into fragments, and parts of them exist in various collections. Seven still remained in some garret or cellar, when Rubens, just a century afterwards, mentioned their existence to Charles I., and advised him to purchase them for the use of a tapestry manufactory which King James I. had established at Mortlake. The purchase was made. They had been cut into long slips about two feet wide, for the convenience of the workmen, and in this state they arrived in England.* On Charles's death, Cromwell bought them at the sale of the royal effects for 300*l*. We had very nearly lost them again in the reign of Charles II., for Louis XIV. having intimated through his ambassador, Barillon, a wish to possess them at any price, the needy, careless Charles was on the point of yielding them, and would have done so but for the representations of the Lord Treasurer Danby, to whom, in fact, we owe it that they were not ceded to France. They remained, however, neglected in one of the lumber-rooms at Whitehall till the reign of William III., and narrowly escaped

* There can be no doubt of the purpose for which Charles I. acquired them. The entry in the king's catalogue runs thus:—"In a slit wooden case some two cartoons of Raphael Urbino's, *for hangings to be made by*; and the other five are, by the king's appointment, delivered to Mr. Francis Cleyne, at Mortlake, *to make hangings by*." It appears that Cromwell had some intention of continuing the manufactory of tapestry at Mortlake as a national undertaking, and retained the cartoons for purposes connected with it.

being destroyed by fire when Whitehall was burned in 1698. It must have been shortly afterwards that King William ordered them to be repaired, the fragments pasted together and stretched upon linen; and being just at that time occupied with the alterations and improvements at Hampton Court, Sir Christopher Wren had his commands to plan and erect a room expressly to receive them—the room in which they now hang.

In the Vatican there is a second set of ten tapestries, for which Raphael gave the original designs, but he did not execute the cartoons, and the style of drawing in those fragments which remain is not his. A very fine fragment of one of these cartoons, *The Massacre of the Innocents*, is in our National Gallery. According to the best authorities, this is not by the hand of Raphael. It is very different in the style of execution from the cartoons at Hampton Court, and has been painted over in oil, when or by whom is not known, but certainly before 1730. The subjects of the second set were all from the life of Christ, and were as follows:—

1. The Massacre of the Innocents.
2. The Adoration of the Shepherds.
3. The Adoration of the Magi.
4. The Presentation in the Temple.
5. The Resurrection.
6. The Noli me Tangere.
7. The Descent into Purgatory.
8. Christ and the Disciples at Emmaus.
9. The Ascension.
10. The Descent of the Holy Ghost.

The tapestries of these subjects still hang in the Vatican, and all have been engraved.

The fame of Raphael had by this time spread to other countries. Horace Walpole, in the 'Anecdotes of Painting,' assures us that Henry VIII., who on coming to the throne was desirous of emulating Francis I. as a patron of art, invited Raphael to his court; but he does not say on what authority he states this as a fact. At all events, the young king was obliged to content himself with the little St. George sent to him by the Duke of Urbino, as a specimen of Raphael's talent; and with Holbein, whom he soon after engaged in his service, as his court painter —perhaps the best substitute for Raphael in point of original genius then to be obtained by offers of gold or patronage. Francis I. was also most anxious to attract Raphael to his court, and, not succeeding, he desired to have a picture by his hand, leaving him the choice of subject. As Raphael had chosen St. George as the fittest subject for the King of England, he now, with equal propriety and taste, chose St. Michael, the patron saint of the most celebrated military order in France, as likely to be the most acceptable subject for the French king, and represented the archangel as victorious over the Spirit of Evil. The figures are as large as life. St. Michael, beaming with angelic beauty and power, stands with one foot on the Evil One, and raises his lance to thrust him down to the deep. Satan is so represented that very little of his hideous and prostrate form is visible, the grand victorious Spirit filling the whole canvas and the eye of the spectator. The king expressed

his satisfaction in a right royal and graceful fashion, and rewarded the artist munificently. Raphael, considering himself overpaid, and not to be outdone in generosity, sent to the king his famous Holy Family (called the large Holy Family, because the figures are life-size), in which the infant Christ is seen in act to spring from the cradle into his mother's arms, while angels scatter flowers from above. Engravings and copies without number exist of this famous picture: the original is in the gallery of the Louvre. Raphael sent also his St. Margaret overcoming the Dragon, a compliment apparently to the king's favourite sister, Margaret, queen of Navarre: this also is in the Louvre. When they were placed before Francis I. he ordered his treasurer to count out twenty-four thousand livres (about 3000*l.* according to the present value of money), and sent it to the painter with the strongest expressions of his approbation. At a later period he purchased the beautiful portrait of Joanna of Arragon, vice-queen of Naples, which is also in the Louvre.

About the same period (that is, between 1517 and 1520) Raphael painted for the convent of St. Sixtus at Piacenza one of the grandest and most celebrated of all his works, called, from its original destination, the Madonna di San Sisto. It represents the Virgin standing in a majestic attitude; the infant Saviour *enthroned* in her arms; and around her head a glory of innumerable cherubs melting into light. Kneeling before her we see on one side St. Sixtus, on the other St. Barbara, and beneath her feet two heavenly cherubs gaze up in adoration. In execution, as in design, this is probably the

most perfect picture in the world. It is painted throughout by Raphael's own hand; and as no sketch or study of any part of it was ever known to exist, and as the execution must have been, from the thinness and delicacy of the colours, wonderfully rapid, it is supposed that he painted it at once on the canvas—a *creation* rather than a picture. In the beginning of the last century the Elector of Saxony, Augustus III., purchased this picture from the monks of the convent for the sum of sixty thousand florins (about 6000*l.*), and it now forms the chief boast and ornament of the Dresden Gallery.*

For his patron Agostino Chigi, Raphael painted in fresco the history of Cupid and Psyche. The palace which belonged to the Chigi family is now the Villa Farnesina, on the walls of which these famous frescoes may still be seen in very good preservation. In Gruner's admirable work on the 'Decoration of the Palaces and Churches in Italy' there is a perspective view of the saloon in the Farnesina, showing how this beautiful series of compositions is arranged on the ceiling and walls. In the same palace he painted the Triumph of Galatea: in this fresco he was greatly assisted by Giulio Romano.

During the last ten years of his life the fame of Raphael was very much extended by means of the en-

* The engraving by Müller is celebrated; but good impressions are now extremely rare, the plate having been often retouched. The engraving by Steinla is not less fine—superior, perhaps, in the head of the Virgin—and may be more easily procured. There is also a very good and faithful lithograph by Hofstängel, and hundreds of indifferent and bad engravings, of all sizes. One of the *worst* is the French print by Desnoyers.

graver Marc Antonio Raimondi, who, after studying design in the school of Francia at Bologna, betook himself to Rome, and gained the admiration and goodwill of Raphael by the perfect engravings he made from some of his beautiful works. Marc Antonio lived for some time in Raphael's own house, and engraved for him and under his direction most of those precious and exquisite compositions, the most wonderful creations of the mind of Raphael, of which there exist no finished pictures, and in some cases no drawings nor memoranda. Among these may be mentioned a few which are to be found in the Print-room of the British Museum:—1. The Lucretia, a single figure, wonderfully beautiful. 2. The Massacre of the Innocents. 3. Eve presenting to Adam the forbidden fruit. 4. The Last Supper. 5. The Mater Dolorosa, the Virgin lamenting over the dead body of our Saviour. 6. Another of the same subject, containing several figures. These are only a few of the most precious, for within the present limits it is impossible to go into detail. Some time after the death of Raphael, Marc Antonio was very deservedly banished from Rome by Clement VII. Tempted by gold, he had lent his unrivalled skill to shameful purposes. According to Malvasia, he was afterwards assassinated at Bologna.

The last great picture which Raphael undertook, and which at the time of his death was not quite completed, was the Transfiguration of our Saviour on Mount Tabor. This picture is divided into two parts. The lower part contains a crowd of figures, and is full of passion, energy, action. In the centre is the demoniac boy, convulsed and struggling in the arms of his father.

Two women, kneeling, implore assistance; others are seen crying aloud and stretching out their arms for aid. In the disciples of Jesus we see exhibited, in various shades of expression, astonishment, horror, sympathy, profound thought. One among them, with a benign and youthful countenance, looks compassionately on the father, plainly intimating that he can give no help. The upper part of the picture represents Mount Tabor: the three apostles lie prostrate, dazzled, on the earth; above them, transfigured in glory, floats the divine form of the Saviour, with Moses and Elias on either side. "The two-fold action contained in this picture, to which shallow critics have taken exception, is explained historically and satisfactorily merely by the fact that the incident of the possessed boy occurred in the absence of Christ; but it explains itself in a still higher sense, when we consider the deeper universal meaning of the picture. For this purpose it is not even necessary to consult the books of the New Testament for the explanation of the particular incidents: the lower portion represents the calamities and miseries of human life, the rule of demoniac power, the weakness even of the faithful when unassisted, and directs them to look on high for aid and strength in adversity. Above, in the brightness of divine bliss, undisturbed by the sufferings of the lower world, we behold the source of our consolation and of our redemption from evil."

At this time the lovers of painting at Rome were divided in opinion as to the relative merits of Michael Angelo and Raphael, and formed two great parties, that of Raphael being by far the most numerous.

Michael Angelo, with characteristic haughtiness, disdained any open rivalry with Raphael, and put forward the Venetian, Sebastian del Piombo, as no unworthy competitor of the great Roman painter. Raphael bowed before Michael Angelo, and, with the modesty and candour which belonged to his character, was heard to thank Heaven that he had been born in the same age and enabled to profit by the grand creations of that sublime genius: but he was by no means inclined to yield any supremacy to Sebastian; he knew his own strength too well. To decide the controversy, the Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII., commissioned Raphael to paint this picture of the Transfiguration, and at the same time commanded from Sebastian del Piombo the Raising of Lazarus, which is now in our National Gallery; both pictures were intended by the cardinal for his cathedral at Narbonne, he having lately been created Archbishop of Narbonne by Francis I. Michael Angelo, well aware that Sebastian was a far better colourist than designer, furnished him with the cartoon for his picture, and, it is said, drew some of the figures (that of Lazarus, for example) with his own hand on the panel; but he was so far from doing this secretly, that Raphael heard of it, and exclaimed joyfully, "Michael Angelo has graciously favoured me, in that he has deemed me worthy to compete with himself, and not with Sebastian!" But he did not live to enjoy the triumph of his acknowledged superiority, dying before he had finished his picture, which was afterwards completed by the hand of Giulio Romano.

During the last years of his life, and while engaged

in painting the Transfiguration, Raphael's active mind was employed on many other things. He had been appointed by the pope to superintend the building of St. Peter's, and he prepared the architectural plans for that vast undertaking. He was most active and zealous in carrying out the pope's project for disinterring and preserving the remains of art which lay buried beneath the ruins of ancient Rome. A letter is yet extant addressed by Raphael to Pope Leo X., in which he lays down a systematic, well-considered plan for excavating by degrees the whole of the ancient city; and a writer of that time has left a Latin epigram to this purpose—that Raphael had sought and found in Rome "*another Rome*:" "To seek it," adds the poet, "was worthy of a great man; to reveal it, worthy of a god." He also made several drawings and models for sculpture, particularly for a statue of Jonah, now in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo. The beautiful group of the Dead Child and the Dolphin is also attributed to him. Nor was this all. With a princely magnificence he had sent artists at his own cost to various parts of Italy and into Greece, to make drawings from those remains of antiquity which his numerous and important avocations prevented him from visiting himself. He was in close intimacy and correspondence with most of the celebrated men of his time; interested himself in all that was going forward; mingled in society, lived in splendour, and was always ready to assist generously his own family, and the pupils who had gathered round him. The Cardinal Bibbiena offered him his niece in marriage,

with a dowry of three thousand gold crowns; but the early death of Maria di Bibbiena prevented this union, for which it appears that Raphael himself had no great inclination. In possession of all that ambition could desire, for him the cup of life was still running over with love, hope, power, glory—when, in the very prime of manhood, and in the midst of vast undertakings, he was seized with a violent fever, caught, it is said, in superintending some subterranean excavations, and expired after an illness of fourteen days. His death took place on Good Friday (his birthday), April 6, 1520, having completed his thirty-seventh year. Great was the grief of all classes; unspeakable that of his friends and scholars. The pope had sent every day to inquire after his health, adding the most kind and cheering messages; and when told that the beloved and admired painter was no more, he broke out into lamentations on his own and the world's loss. The body was laid on a bed of state, and above it was suspended the last work of that divine hand, the glorious Transfiguration. From his own house, near St. Peter's, a multitude of all ranks followed the bier in sad procession, and his remains were laid in the church of the Pantheon, near those of his betrothed bride, Maria di Bibbiena, in a spot chosen by himself during his lifetime.

Several years ago (in the year 1833) there arose among the antiquarians of Rome a keen dispute concerning a human skull, which, on no evidence whatever, except a long-received tradition, had been preserved and exhibited in the Academy of St. Luke as the skull

of Raphael. Some even expressed a doubt as to the exact place of his sepulchre, though upon this point the contemporary testimony seemed to leave no room for uncertainty. To ascertain the fact, permission was obtained from the papal government, and from the canons of the church of the Rotunda (*i. e.* of the Pantheon), to make some researches; and on the 14th of September in the same year, after five days spent in removing the pavement in several places, the remains of Raphael were discovered in a vault behind the high altar, and certified as his by indisputable proofs. After being examined, and a cast made from the skull and from the right hand, the skeleton was exhibited publicly in a glass case, and multitudes thronged to the church to look upon it. On the 18th of October, 1833, a second funeral ceremony took place. The remains were deposited in a pine-wood coffin, then in a marble sarcophagus, presented by the pope (Gregory XVI.), and reverently consigned to their former resting-place, in presence of more than three thousand spectators, including almost all the artists, the officers of government, and other persons of the highest rank in Rome.

Besides his grand compositions from the Old and New Testament and his frescoes and arabesques in the Vatican, Raphael has left about one hundred and twenty pictures of the Virgin and Child, all various—only resembling each other in the peculiar type of chaste and maternal loveliness which he has given to the Virgin, and the infantine beauty of the Child. The most cele-

brated of his Madonnas, in the order in which they were painted, are:—1. The Madonna di Foligno, in the Vatican. 2. The Madonna of the Fish, at Madrid. 3. The Madonna del Cardellino, at Florence. 4. The Madonna di San Sisto, at Dresden. 5. The Madonna called the Pearl, at Madrid. Eight of his Madonna pictures are in England, in private galleries.

There are but few pictures taken from mythology and profane history, the Cupid and Psyche and the Galatea being the most important; but a vast number of drawings and compositions, some of them of consummate beauty.

He painted about eighty portraits, of which the most famous are Julius II.; Leo X. (the originals of both these are at Florence); Cardinal Bibbiena; Cardinal Bembo; and Count Castiglione (the last at Paris): the Youth with his Violin, in the Sciarra Palace, at Rome; Bindo Altoviti (supposed for a long time to be his own portrait), now at Munich; the beautiful Joanna of Arragon, in the Louvre. The portrait called the Fornarina had long been supposed to represent a young girl to whom Raphael had attached himself soon after his arrival in Rome; but this appears very doubtful; Passavant supposes it to represent Beatrice Pio, a celebrated improvisatrice of that time. Besides these we have seventeen architectural designs for buildings, public and private, and several designs for sculpture, ornaments, &c. But it is not any single production of his hand, however rarely beautiful, nor his superiority in any particular department of art; it is the number and

the variety of his creations, the union of inexhaustible fertility of imagination with excellence of every kind—faculties never combined in the same degree in any artist before or since—which have placed Raphael at the head of his profession, and have rendered him the wonder and delight of all ages.

We shall now proceed to give an account of some of Raphael's most famous scholars.

THE SCHOLARS OF RAPHAEL.

We have already had occasion to observe the great number of scholars, some of them older than himself, who had assembled round Raphael, and the unusual harmony in which they lived together; Vasari relates that, when he went to court, a train of fifty painters attended on him from his own house to the Vatican. They came from every part of Italy; from Florence, Milan, Venice, Bologna, Ferrara, Naples, and even from beyond the Alps, to study under the great Roman master. Many of them assisted, with more or less skill, in the execution of his great works in fresco; some imitated him in one thing, some in another; but the unrivalled charm of Raphael's productions lies in the impress of the mind which produced them; this he could not impart to others. Those who followed servilely a particular manner of conception and drawing, which they called "Raphael's style," degenerated into insipidity and littleness. Those who had original power deviated into exaggerations and perversities. Not one among them approached *him*. Some caught a faint reflection of his grace, some of his power; but they turned it to other purposes; they worked in a different spirit; they followed the fashion of the hour.

40.—Gian Francesco Penni, called Il Fattore.

From Vasari's History.

While he lived, his noble aims elevated them, but when he died they fell away one after another. The lavish and magnificent Pope Leo X. was succeeded in 1521 by Adrian VI., a man conscientious even to severity, sparing even to asceticism, and without any sympathies either for art or artists; during his short pontificate of two years all the works in the Vatican and St. Peter's were suspended; the poor painters were starving; and the dreadful pestilence which raged in 1523 drove many from the city. Under Clement VII., one of the Medici, and nephew of Leo X., the arts for a time revived; but the sack of Rome by the barbarous soldiery of Bourbon in 1527 completed the dispersion of the artists who had flocked to the capital: each, returning to his native country or city, became also a teacher; and thus what was called "Raphael's School," or the "Roman School," was spread from one end of Italy to the other.

Raphael had left by his will his two favourite scholars, Gian Francesco Penni and Giulio Romano, as executors, and to them he bequeathed the task of completing his unfinished works.

Gian Francesco Penni, called Il Fattore, was his beloved and confidential pupil, and had assisted him much, particularly in preparing his cartoons; but everything he executed from his own mind and after Raphael's death has, with much tenderness and *Raffaelesque* grace, a sort of feebleness more of mind than hand; his pictures are very rare. He died in 1528.

His brother Luca Penni was in England for some years in the service of Henry VIII., and employed by Wolsey in decorating his palace at Hampton Court;

some remains of his performances there were still to be seen in the middle of the last century; but Horace Walpole's notion that Luca Penni executed those three singular pictures, the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the Battle of the Spurs, and the Embarkation of Henry VIII., appears to be quite unfounded.

Giulio Pippi, surnamed from the place of his birth Il Romano, and generally styled Giulio Romano, was also much beloved by Raphael, and of all his scholars the most distinguished for original power. While under the influence of Raphael's mind, he imitated his manner and copied his pictures so successfully, that it is sometimes difficult for the best judges to distinguish the difference of hand. The Julius II. in our National Gallery is an instance. After Raphael's death he abandoned himself to his own luxuriant genius. He lost the simplicity, the grace, the chaste and elevated feeling which had characterised his master. He became strongly embued with the then reigning taste for classical and mythological subjects, which he treated not exactly in a classical spirit, but with great boldness and fire, both in conception and execution. He did not excel in religious subjects: if he had to paint the Virgin, he gave her the air and form of a commanding Juno; if a Saviour, he was like a Roman emperor; the apostles in his pictures are like heathen philosophers; but when he had to deal with gods and Titans he was in his element.

For four years after the death of Raphael he was chiefly occupied in completing his master's unfinished works; at the end of that time he went to Mantua and entered the service of the Duke Gonzaga, as painter and

41.—Giulio Pippi, called Giulio Romano.

From the Uffizi Gallery.

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

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architect. He designed for him a splendid palace called the Palazzo del Te, which he decorated with frescoes in a grand but coarse style. In one saloon he represented Jupiter vanquishing the giants; in another, the history of Psyche: everywhere we see great luxuriance of fancy, wonderful power of drawing, and a bold large style of treatment; but great coarseness of imagination, red heavy colouring, and a pagan rather than a *classical* taste.

In character Giulio Romano was a man of generous mind; princely in his style of living; an accomplished courtier, yet commanding respect by a lofty sense of his own dignity as an artist. He amassed great riches in the service of the Duke Gonzaga, and spent his life at Mantua: his most important works are to be found in the palaces and churches of that city.

When Charles I. purchased the entire collection of the Dukes of Mantua in 1629, there were among them many pictures by Giulio Romano; one of these was the admirable copy of Raphael's fresco of the battle between Constantine and Maxentius, now in the guard-room at Hampton Court; in the same gallery are seven others, all mythological, and characteristic certainly, but by no means favourable specimens of his genius; they have besides been coarsely painted over by some restorer, so as to retain no trace of the original workmanship. The most important picture which came into the possession of King Charles was a Nativity, a large altar-piece, which after the king's death was sold into France: it is now in the Louvre (293). A very pretty little picture is the Venus persuading Vulcan to forge

the arrows of Cupid; also in the Louvre (296), from which the group of Cupids in the illustration has been taken. Engravings after Giulio Romano are very commonly met with.

Giulio Romano was invited by Francis I. to undertake the decoration of his palace at Fontainebleau, but, not being able to leave Mantua, he sent his pupil Primaticcio, who covered the walls with frescoes and arabesques, much in the manner of those in the Palazzo del Te; that is to say, with gods and goddesses, fauns, satyrs, nymphs, Cupids, Cyclops, Titans, in a style as remote from that of Raphael as can well be imagined, and yet not destitute of a certain grandeur.

Primaticcio, Niccolò del Abate, Rosso, and others who worked with them, are designated in the history of art as the "Fontainebleau School," of which Primaticcio is considered the chief.

Giovanni da Udine, who excelled in painting animals, flowers, and still life, was Raphael's chief assistant in the famous arabesques of the Vatican.

Perino del Vaga, another of Raphael's scholars, carried his style to Genoa, where he was chiefly employed; and Andrea di Salerno, a far more charming painter, who was at Rome but a short time, has left many pictures at Naples, nearer to Raphael in point of feeling than those of other scholars who had studied under his eye for years: Andrea seems also to have been allied to his master in mind and character, for Raphael parted from him with deep regret.

Polidoro Caldara, called from the place of his birth Polidoro da Caravaggio, was a poor boy who had been

42.—Michael-Angelo Amerighi da Caravaggio.

By himself, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

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employed by the fresco-painters in the Vatican to carry the wet mortar and afterwards to grind their colours: he learned to admire, then to emulate what he saw, and Raphael encouraged and aided him by his instructions. The bent of Polidoro's genius as it developed itself was a curious and interesting compound of his two vocations. He had been a mason, or what we should call a bricklayer's boy, for the first twenty years of his life. From building houses he took to decorating them, and from an early familiarity with the remains of antiquity lying around him, the mind of the uneducated mechanic became unconsciously imbued with the very spirit of antiquity; not one of Raphael's scholars was so distinguished for a classical purity of taste as Polidoro. He painted, chiefly in chiaro'scuro (that is, in two colours, light and shade), friezes, composed of processions of figures, such as we see in the ancient bas-reliefs, sea and river gods, tritons, bacchantes, fauns, satyrs, Cupids. At Hampton Court there are six pieces of a small narrow frieze, representing boys and animals, which apparently formed the top of a bedstead or some other piece of furniture; these will give some faint idea of the decorative style of Polidoro. This painter was much employed at Naples, and afterwards at Messina, where he was assassinated by one of his servants for the sake of his money.

Pellegrino da Modena, an excellent painter, and one of Raphael's most valuable assistants in his Scriptural subjects, carried the "Roman School" to Modena.

At this time there was in Ferrara a school of painters

very peculiar in style, distinguished chiefly by extreme elegance of execution, a miniature-like neatness in the details, and deep, vigorous, contrasted colours—as intense crimson, vivid green, brilliant white, approximated;—a little grotesque in point of taste, and rather like the very early German school in feeling and treatment, but with more grace and ideality. Dosso Dossi and Battista Dossi of Ferrara were two brothers, whose fate has been peculiar; for while during their lives they were divided by such a bitter and burning enmity that they would not speak to or look at each other, they were obliged to work together, are always named together, and it has become almost impossible to distinguish them in name or works. Ariosto mentions them simply as "Due Dossi"—Two Dossi. Of a picture in the Louvre (No. 185), the catalogue says that it is "*positivement l'ouvrage de l'un des deux frères Dossi;* and all writers on art find it difficult to allot their respective claims to pictures which bear the name. It seems that Battista Dossi excelled in landscape backgrounds, and had a thorough and poetical feeling for nature. Two fine pictures I remember, one in the Dresden Gallery (the Predestination of the Virgin *), and one in the Borghese Gallery (which is rich in pictures of the Ferrara school) representing Circe in a wild landscape. This last I should attribute to Battista. That two beings so divided in life, who hated each other as only kindred hate, should be in their genius and in their renown so indivisible, is very striking.

Another of these Ferrarese painters, Benvenuto Ga-

* See p. 148.

43.—Dosso Dossi.

By himself, in the Uffizi Gallery.

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44.—Garofalo (Benvenuto Tisio).

Engraved in the 1568 *edition of Vasari.*

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45.—Giulio Clovio.

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ROFALO, studied for some time at Rome in the school of Raphael, but it does not appear that he assisted, like most of the other students, in any of his works. He was older than Raphael, and already advanced in his art before he went to Rome; but while there he knew how to profit by the higher principles which were laid down, and studied assiduously; with a larger, freer style of drawing, and a certain elevation in the expression of his heads acquired in the school of Raphael, he combined the glowing colour which characterised the first painters of his native city. There is a small picture by Garofalo in our National Gallery, and also a picture by Mazzolino da Ferrara, which will give some idea of this school, with its characteristic beauty of colour and singularity of treatment.

Another painter who must not be omitted was GIULIO CLOVIO. He was originally a monk, and began by imitating the miniatures in the illuminated missals and psalm-books used in the Church. He then studied at Rome, and was particularly indebted to Michael Angelo and Giulio Romano. His works are a proof that greatness and correctness of style do not depend on size and space; for into a few inches square, into the arabesque ornaments round a page of manuscript, he could throw a feeling of the sublime and beautiful worthy of the great masters of art. The vigour and precision of his drawing in the most diminutive figures, the imaginative beauty of some of his tiny compositions (for Giulio was no copyist), is almost inconceivable. His works were enormously paid, and executed only for sovereign princes and rich prelates. Fifteen years of his life were

spent in the service of Pope Paul III. (1534-1549), for whom his finest productions were executed. He died in 1578, at the age of eighty.

Besides the Italians, Innocenza da Imola, Timoteo della Vite of Bologna, and Andrea di Salerno of Naples, many painters came from beyond the Alps to place themselves under the tuition of Raphael; among these were Bernard von Orlay from Brussels; Michael Coxcis from Mechlin; and George Penz from Nuremberg. But the influence of Raphael's mind and style is not very apparent in any of these painters.

On the whole we may say that, while Michael Angelo and Raphael displayed in all they did the inspiration of genius, their scholars and imitators inundated all Italy with mediocrity:—

> "Art with hollow forms was fed,
> But the *soul* of art lay dead."

46.—Antonio Allegri, called Correggio.

From a Portrait in the Vienna Gallery.

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CORREGGIO AND GIORGIONE,

AND

THEIR SCHOLARS.

WHILE the great painters of the Florentine school, with Michael Angelo at their head, were carrying out the principle of *form*, and those of Rome—the followers and imitators of Raphael—were carrying out the principle of *expression*—and the first school deviating into exaggeration, and the latter degenerating into mannerism—there arose in the north of Italy two extraordinary and original men, who, guided by their own individual genius and temperament, took up different principles and worked them out to perfection: one revelling in the illusions of *chiaro'scuro*, so that to him all nature appeared clothed in a soft transparent veil of lights and shadows; the other delighting in the luxurious depth of tints, and beholding all nature steeped in the glow of an Italian sunset. They chose each their world, and "drew after them a third part of heaven."

Of the two, Giorgione appears to have been the most original—the most of a creator and inventor. Correggio may possibly have owed his conception of melting, vanishing outlines and transparent shadows, and his peculiar feeling of grace, to Lionardo da Vinci, whose

pictures were scattered over the whole of the north of Italy. Giorgione found in his own fervid melancholy character the mystery of his colouring—warm, glowing, yet subdued—and the noble yet tender sentiment of his heads; characteristics which, transmitted to Titian, became in colouring more sunshiny and brilliant, without losing depth and harmony; and in expression more cheerful, still retaining intellect and dignity.

We will speak first of Correggio, so styled from his birthplace, a small town not far from Modena, now called Reggio. His real name was Antonio Allegri, and he was born towards the end of the year 1493. Raphael was at this time ten years old, Michael Angelo twenty, and Lionardo da Vinci in his fortieth year. The father of Antonio was Pellegrino Allegri, a tradesman possessed of moderate property in houses and land. He gave his son a careful education, and had him instructed in literature and rhetoric, as well as in the rudiments of art, which he imbibed at a very early age from an uncle, Lorenzo Allegri, a painter of little merit. Afterwards he studied for a short time under Andrea Mantegna; and although, when this painter died in 1506, Antonio was but thirteen, he had so far profited by his instructions and those of Francesco Mantegna, who continued his father's school, that he drew well and caught that taste and skill in foreshortening which distinguished his later works; it was an art which Mantegna may almost be said to have invented, and which was first taught in his academy; but the dry, hard, precise, meagre style of the Mantegna school, Correggio soon abandoned for a manner entirely his

own, in which movement, variety, and, above all, the most delicate gradation of light and shadow, are the principal elements. All these qualities are apparent in the earliest of his authenticated pictures, painted in 1512, when he was about eighteen. It is one of the large altar-pieces in the Dresden gallery, called the Madonna di San Francesco, because St. Francis is one of the principal figures. The influence of the taste and manner of Lionardo da Vinci is very conspicuous in this picture.

In 1519, having acquired some reputation and fortune in his profession, Correggio married Girolama Merlini; and in the following year, being then six-and-twenty, he was commissioned to paint in fresco the cupola of the church of San Giovanni at Parma. He chose for his subject the Ascension of Christ, who in the centre appears soaring upwards into heaven, surrounded by the Twelve Apostles, seated around on clouds, and who appear to be watching his progress to the realms above; below are the four Evangelists in the four arches, with the four Fathers of the Church. The figures in the upper part are of course colossal, and foreshortened with admirable skill, so as to produce a wonderful effect when viewed from below. In the apsis of the same church, over the high altar, he painted the Coronation of the Virgin, but this was destroyed when the church was subsequently enlarged, and is now only known through engravings and the copies made by Annibal Carracci, which are preserved at Naples. For this work Correggio received five hundred gold crowns, equal to about 1500*l.* at the present day.

About the year 1525 Correggio was invited to Mantua,

where he painted for the reigning Duke, Federigo Gonzaga, the Education of Cupid, which is now in our National Gallery. For the same accomplished but profligate prince he painted the other mythological stories of Io, Leda, Danaë, and Antiope.*

Passing over, for the present, a variety of works which Correggio painted in the next four or five years, we shall only observe that the cupola of San Giovanni gave so much satisfaction that he was called upon to decorate in the same manner the cathedral of Parma, which is dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the centre of the dome he represented the Assumption—the Madonna soaring into heaven, while Christ descends from his throne in bliss to meet her: an innumerable host of saints and angels, rejoicing and singing hymns of triumph, surround these principal personages. Lower down in a circle stand the Apostles, and, lower still, Genii bearing candelabra and swinging censers. In lunettes below are the four Evangelists, the figure of St. John being one of the finest. The whole composition is full of glorious life; wonderful for the relief, the bold and perfect foreshortening, the management of the chiaro'scuro; but from the innumerable figures, and the play of the limbs seen from below—legs and arms being more conspicuous than bodies—the great artist was reproached in his lifetime with having painted "un guazzetto di rane" (a fricassée of frogs).† There

* The Io and the Leda are in the Berlin Gallery; the Danaë in the Borghese Gallery; and the Antiope in the Louvre: the latter once belonged to King Charles.

† In cookery only the hind legs of the frogs are used; the bodies are thrown away.

are several engravings of this magnificent work; but those who would form a just idea of Correggio's sublime conception and power of drawing should see some of the cartoons prepared for the frescoes and drawn in chalk by his own hand. A few of these, representing chiefly angels and cherubim, were discovered a few years ago at Parma, rolled up in a garret: they were conveyed to Rome, thence brought to England by Dr. Emil Braun, and are now in the British Museum, having been lately purchased by the trustees. These heads and forms are gigantic, nearly twice the size of life; yet such is the excellence of the drawing, and the perfect grace and sweetness of the expression, that they strike the fancy as sublimely beautiful, without giving the slightest impression of exaggeration or effort. Our artists who are preparing cartoons for works on a large scale could have no finer studies than these grand fragments, emanations of the mind and creations of the hand of one of the most distinguished masters in art. They show his manner of setting to work, and are in this respect an invaluable lesson to young painters.

Correggio finished the dome of the cathedral of Parma in 1530, and returned to his native town, where he resided for the remainder of his life. We find that in the year 1533 he was one of the witnesses to a marriage which was celebrated in the castle of Correggio, between Ippolito, Lord of Correggio (son of Veronica Gambara, the illustrious poetess, who was the widow of Ghiberto da Correggio), and Chiara da Correggio, his cousin. Correggio's presence on this occasion, and his signature to the marriage-deed, prove the estimation in which he

was held by his sovereigns. In the following year he had engaged to paint for Alberto Panciroli an altar-piece; the subject fixed upon is not known, but it *is* certainly known that he received in advance, and before his work was commenced, twenty-five gold crowns. It was destined never to be begun, for soon after signing this agreement Correggio was seized with a malignant fever, of which he died after a few days' illness, March 5, 1534, in the forty-first year of his age. He was buried in his family sepulchre in the Franciscan convent at Correggio, and a few words placed over his tomb merely record the day of his death, and his name and profession—"Maestro Antonio Allegri, depintore."

There is a tradition that Correggio was a self-educated painter, unassisted except by his own transcendent genius; that he lived in great obscurity and indigence; and that he was ill remunerated for his works. And it is further related, that, having been paid in copper coin a sum of sixty crowns for one of his pictures, he carried home this load in a sack on his shoulders, being anxious to relieve the wants of his family; and stopping, when heated and wearied, to refresh himself with a draught of cold water, he was seized with a fever, of which he died. Though this tradition has been proved to be false, and is completely refuted by the circumstances of the last years of his life related above, yet the impression that Correggio died miserably and in indigence prevailed to a late period.* From whatever cause it arose, it was early current. Annibal Carracci, writing from

* The popular tradition of the death of Correggio is the subject of a very beautiful tragedy by Œhlenschläger.

Parma fifty years after the death of Correggio, says, "I rage and weep to think of the fate of this poor Antonio; so great a man—if, indeed, he were not rather an angel in the flesh—to be lost here, to live unknown, and to die unhappily!" Now he who painted the dome of the cathedral of Parma, and who stood by as one of the chosen witnesses of the marriage of his sovereign, could not have lived unknown and unregarded; and we have no just reason to suppose that this gentle, amiable, and unambitious man died unhappily. With regard to his deficient education, it appears certain that he studied anatomy under Lombardi, a famous physician of that time, and his works exhibit not only a classical and cultivated taste, but a knowledge of the sciences—of optics, mathematics, perspective, and chemistry, as far as they were then carried. His use and skilful preparation of rare and expensive colours imply neither poverty nor ignorance. His modest, quiet, amiable temper and domestic habits may have given rise to the report that he lived neglected and obscure in his native city; he had not, like other great masters of his time, an academy for teaching, and a retinue of scholars to spread his name and contend for the supremacy of their master. Whether Correggio ever visited Rome is a point undecided by any evidence for or against, and it is most probable that he did not. It is said that he was at Bologna, where he saw Raphael's St. Cecilia, and, after contemplating it for some time with admiration, he turned away, exclaiming, "*Anch' io sono pittore!*" (And I too am a painter!)—an anecdote which shows that, if unambitious and unpresuming, he was not without a consciousness of his own merit.

The father of Correggio, Pellegrino Allegri, who survived him, repaid the twenty five gold crowns which his son had received in advance for work he did not live to complete. The only son of Correggio, Pomponio Quirino Allegri, became a painter, but never attained to any great reputation, and appears to have been of a careless, restless disposition.

I will now give some account of Correggio's works. His two greatest performances—the dome of the San Giovanni and that of the cathedral of Parma—have been mentioned. His smaller pictures, though not numerous, are dispersed through so many galleries that they cannot be said to be rare. It is remarkable that they are very seldom met with in the possession of individuals, but, with few exceptions, are to be found in royal and public collections.

In our National Gallery are five pictures by Correggio: two are studies of angels' heads, which, as they are not found in any of the existing frescoes, are supposed to have formed part of the composition in the San Giovanni, which, as already related, was destroyed. The other three are among his most celebrated works. The first, Mercury teaching Cupid to read in the presence of Venus, is an epitome of all the qualities which characterise the oil painter; that peculiar smiling grace which is the expression of a kind of Elysian happiness, and that flowing outline, that melting softness of tone, which are quite illusive. "Those who may not perfectly understand what artists and critics mean when they dwell with rapture on Correggio's wonderful *chiaro'-scuro* should look well into this picture. They will perceive that in the painting of the limbs they can look

through the shadows into the substance, as it might be into the flesh and blood; the shadows seem mutable, accidental, and aërial, as if *between* the eye and the colours, and not incorporated with them. In this lies the inimitable excellence of Correggio." *

This picture was painted for Federigo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua; it was brought to England in 1629, when the Mantua Gallery was bought by our Charles I., and hung in his apartment at Whitehall; afterwards it passed into the possession of the Duke of Alva; then, during the French invasion of Spain, Murat secured it as his share of the plunder; and his widow sold it to the Marquess of Londonderry, from whom it was purchased by the nation. The Ecce Homo was purchased at the same time: it is chiefly remarkable for the fine head of the Virgin, who faints with anguish on beholding the suffering and degradation of her Son; the dying away of sense and sensation under the influence of mental pain is expressed with admirable and affecting truth: the rest of the picture is perhaps rather feeble, and the head of Christ not to be compared to one crowned with thorns which is in the possession of Lord Cowper, nor with another in the Bridgewater collection. The third picture is a small but most exquisite Madonna, known as the *Vierge au Panier*, from the little basket in front of the picture. The Virgin, seated, holds the infant Christ on her knee, and looks down upon him with the fondest expression of maternal rapture, while he gazes up in her face: Joseph is seen in the background.

* 'Public Galleries of Art,' Murray, 1841; in which there is a history of the picture, too long to be inserted here.

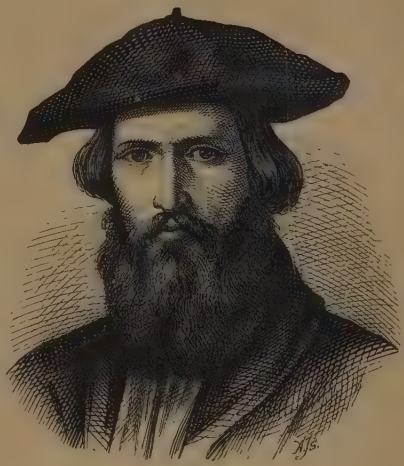
This, though called a Holy Family, is a simple domestic scene; and Correggio probably in this, as in other instances, made the original study from his wife and child. Another picture in our gallery ascribed to Correggio, the Christ on the Mount of Olives, is a very fine old copy, perhaps a duplicate, of an original picture now in the possession of the Duke of Wellington.

In the gallery of Parma are five of the most important and beautiful pictures of Correggio. The most celebrated is that called the St. Jerome. It represents the saint presenting to the Virgin and Child his translation of the Scriptures, while on the other side the Magdalen bends down and kisses with devotion the feet of the infant Saviour.

The Dresden Gallery is also rich in pictures of Correggio: it contains six pictures, of which four are large altarpieces, bought out of churches in Modena; among these is the famous picture of the Nativity, called the Notte, or *Night*, of Correggio, because it is illuminated only by the unearthly splendour which beams round the head of the infant Saviour; and the still more famous Magdalene, who lies extended on the ground intently reading the Scriptures. No picture in the world has been more universally admired and multiplied through copies and engravings than this little picture.

In the Florence Gallery are three pictures; one of them, the Madonna on her knees, adoring with ecstacy her Infant, who lies before her on a portion of her garment, is given in our illustration.

In the Louvre are two of his works—the Marriage



47.—Francesco Mazzuola, called Il Parmeggiano.

By himself, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence.

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of St. Catherine, and the Antiope, painted for the Duke of Mantua.

In the Naples Gallery there are three; one of them a most lovely Madonna, called, from the peculiar head-dress, the Zingarella, or Gipsy.

In the Vienna Gallery are two; and at Berlin three—among them the Io and the Leda.

There are in the British Museum a complete collection of engravings after Correggio, and a great number of his original drawings.

Correggio had no school of painting, and all his authentic works, except his frescoes, were executed solely by his own hand: in the execution of his frescoes he had assistants, but they could hardly be called his *pupils*. He had, however, a host of imitators who formed what has been called the School of Parma, of which he is considered the head. The most famous of these imitators was Francesco Mazzola, of whom we are now to speak.

PARMIGIANO.

BORN 1503, DIED 1540.

FRANCESCO MAZZOLA, or MAZZUOLI, called PARMIGIANO, and, by the Italians, IL PARMIGIANINO (to express by this endearing diminutive the love as well as the admiration he inspired even from his boyhood), was a native of Parma, born on the 11th of January, 1503. He had two uncles who were painters, and by them he was early initiated into some knowledge of designing, though he could have owed little else to them, both being very

mediocre artists. Endowed with a most precocious genius, ardent in every pursuit, he studied indefatigably, and at the age of fourteen he produced a picture of the Baptism of Christ, wonderful for a boy of his age, exhibiting even thus early much of that easy grace which he is supposed to have learned from Correggio; but Correggio had not then visited Parma. When he arrived there four years afterwards, for the purpose of painting the cupola of San Giovanni, Francesco, then only eighteen, was selected as one of his assistants, and he took this opportunity of imbuing his mind with a style which certainly had much analogy with his own taste and character: Parmigiano, however, had too much genius, too much ambition, to follow in the footsteps of another, however great. Though not great enough himself to be first in that age of greatness, yet, had his rivals and contemporaries been less than giants, he must have overtopped them all; as it was, feeling the impossibility of rising above such men as Michael Angelo, Raphael, Correggio, yet feeling also the consciousness of his own power, he endeavoured to be original by combining what has not yet been harmonised in nature, therefore could hardly succeed in art—the grand drawing of Michael Angelo, the antique grace of Raphael, and the melting tones and sweetness of Correggio. Perhaps, had he been satisfied to look at nature through his own soul and eyes, he would have done better; had he trusted himself more, he would have escaped some of those faults which have rendered many of his works unpleasing, by giving the impression of effort, and of what in art is called *mannerism*. Ambitious, versatile, accomplished, generally admired for

his handsome person and graceful manners, Parmigiano would have been spoiled by vanity, if he had not been a man of strong sensibility and of almost fastidious sentiment and refinement; when these are added to genius, the result is generally a tinge of that melancholy, of that dissatisfaction with all that is achieved or acquired, which seem to have entered largely into the temperament of this painter, rendering his character and life extremely interesting, while it strongly distinguishes him from the serenely mild and equal-tempered Raphael, to whom he was afterwards compared.

When Parmigiano was in his twentieth year he set off for Rome. The recent accession of Clement VII., a declared patron of art, and the death of Raphael, had opened a splendid vista of glory and success to his imagination. He carried with him to Rome three pictures. One of these was an example of his graceful genius; it represented the infant Christ seated on his mother's knee, and taking some fruit from the lap of an angel. The second was a proof of his wonderful dexterity of hand: it was a portrait of himself seated in his atelier amid his books and musical instruments; but the whole scene represented on the panel as if viewed in a convex mirror. The third picture was an instance of the success with which he had studied the magical effects of chiaro'-scuro in Correggio—torchlight, daylight, and a celestial light being all introduced without disturbing the harmony of the colouring. This last he presented to the pope, who received both the young painter and his offering most graciously. He became a favourite at Rome; and as he studiously imitated while there the

works of Raphael, and resembled him in the elegance of his person and manners and the generosity of his disposition, the poets complimented him by saying, or singing, that the late-lost and lamented Raphael had revived in the likeness of Parmigiano: we can now measure more justly the distance which separated them.

While at Rome, Francesco was greatly patronised by the Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, and painted for him several beautiful pictures; for the pope also, several others, and the portrait of a young captain of his guard, Lorenzo Cibo, which is supposed to be the fine portrait now at Windsor. For a noble lady, a certain Donna Maria Buffalini, he painted a grand altarpiece to adorn the chapel of her family at Città di Castello. This is the celebrated Vision of St. Jerome, now in our National Gallery: it represents the Virgin holding a book, with the infant Christ leaning on her knee, as seen above in a glory, while St. John the Baptist points to the celestial vision, and St. Jerome is seen asleep in the background. This picture is an eminent example of all the beauties and faults of Parmigiano. The Madonna and the Child are models of dignity and grace; the drawing is correct and elegant; the play of the lights and shadows, in delicate management, worthy of Correggio: on the other hand, the attitude of St. John the Baptist is an attempt at singularity in drawing, which is altogether forced and theatrical; while the foreshortened figure of St. Jerome in the background is most *uncomfortably* distorted. Notwithstanding these faults, the picture has always been much celebrated. When the church in which it stood was destroyed by an earthquake, the picture was pur-

chased from among the ruins, and afterwards sold to the Marquis of Abercorn for fifteen hundred guineas; subsequently it passed through the hands of two great collectors, Mr. Hart Davis and Mr. Watson Taylor, and was at length purchased by the members of the British Institution, and by them generously presented to the nation.

It is related that Rome was taken by assault and pillaged by the barbarous soldiery of the Constable de Bourbon at the very time that Parmigiano was painting on this picture, and that he was so absorbed by his work, that he heard nothing of the tumult around him till some soldiers, with an officer at their head, broke into his atelier. As he turned round in quiet surprise from his easel, they were so struck by the beauty of his work, as well as by the composure of the artist, that they retired without doing him any injury. But another party afterwards seized him, insisted on ransom, and robbed him of all he possessed. Thus reduced to poverty, he fled from Rome, now a scene of indescribable horrors, and reached Bologna barefoot and penniless.

But the man of genius has at least this high privilege, that he carries with him everywhere two things of which no earthly power can rob him—his talent and his fame. On arriving at Bologna he drew and etched some beautiful compositions. He is said by some to have himself invented the art of *etching*,—that is, of corroding, or, as it is technically termed, *biting* the lines on the copper-plate by means of nitrous acid, instead of cutting them with the graver. By this new-found

art he was relieved from the immediate pressure of poverty, and very soon found himself, as a painter, in full employment. He executed at Bologna some of his most celebrated works: the Madonna della Rosa of the Dresden Gallery, and the Madonna *dell' collo lungo* (or *long-necked* Madonna) in the Pitti Palace at Florence; also, a famous altarpiece called the St. Margaret: of all these there are numerous engravings.

After residing nearly four years at Bologna, Parmigiano returned, rich and celebrated, to his native city. He reached Parma in 1531, and was immediately engaged to paint in fresco a new church which had recently been erected to the honour of the Virgin Mary, and called the *Steccata*. There were, however, some delays on the side of his employers, and more on his own, and four years passed before he set to work. Much indignation was excited by his dilatory conduct; but it was appeased by the interference of his friend Francesco Boiardo, who offered himself as his surety for the completion of his undertaking within a given time. A new contract was signed, and Parmigiano thereupon presented to his friend his picture of Cupid framing his Bow, a lovely composition; so beautiful, that it has been again and again attributed to Correggio, and engraved under his name, but it is undoubtedly by Parmigiano. Several repetitions of it were executed at the time, so much did it delight all who saw it. Engravings and copies likewise abound; a very good copy is in the Bridgewater Gallery: the picture which is regarded as the original is in the gallery of the Belvedere at Vienna.

At last he began his works in the Steccata, and there he executed his figure of Moses in act to break the Tables of the Law, and his Eve in act to pluck the forbidden fruit: the former is a proof of the height he could aspire to in sublime conception; we have few examples in art of equal grandeur of character and drawing: the poet Gray acknowledged that when he pictured his Bard,—

> "Loose his beard and hoary hair
> Streamed like a meteor on the troubled air,"—

he had this magnificent figure full in his mind. The Eve, on the other hand, is a perfect example of that peculiar grace in which Parmigiano excelled.

After he had painted these and a few other figures in the church, more delays ensued. It is said by some that Parmigiano had wasted his money in gambling and dissipation, and now gave himself up to the pursuit of the philosopher's stone, with a hope of repairing his losses. One of his biographers has taken pains to disprove these imputations; but that he was improvident, restless, and fond of pleasure, is admitted. Whatever might have been the cause, he broke his contract, and was thrown into prison. To obtain his freedom, he entered into a new engagement, but was no sooner at liberty than he escaped to the territory of Cremona. Here his constitutional melancholy seized him; and though he lived, or rather languished, long enough to paint some beautiful pictures, he died in a few months afterwards, and was, at his own request, laid in the earth without any coffin or covering, only a cross of cypress-wood was placed on his breast. He died just

twenty years after Raphael, and at the same age, having only completed his thirty-seventh year.

Parmigiano, in his best pictures, is one of the most fascinating of painters—dignified, graceful, harmonious. His children, Cupids, and angels, are, in general, exquisite; his portraits are noble, and are perhaps his finest and most faultless productions—the Moses and the Eve excepted. It was the error of Parmigiano that in studying grace he was apt to deviate into affectation, and become what the French call *maniéré*: all *studied* grace is disagreeable. In his female figures he lengthened the limbs, the necks, the fingers, till the effect was not grace, but a kind of stately feebleness; and as he imitated at the same time the grand drawing and large manner of Michael Angelo, the result conveys an impression of something quite incongruous in nature and in art. Then his Madonnas have in general a mannered grandeur and elegance, something between goddesses and duchesses; and his female saints are something between nymphs and maids of honour. For instance, none of his compositions, not even the Cupid shaping his Bow, has been more popular than his Marriage of St. Catherine, of which there are so many repetitions; a famous one in the collection of Lord Normanton; another, smaller and most exquisite, in the Grosvenor Gallery—not to speak of an infinitude o copies and engravings: but is not the Madonna, with her long slender neck and her half-averted head, far more aristocratic than divine? and does not St. Catherine hold out her pretty finger for the ring with the air of a lady-bride?—and most of the sacred pictures of Parmi-

48.—Giorgio Barbarelli da Castelfranco, called Giorgione.

From Vasari's History.

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giano are liable to the same censure. Annibal Carracci, in a famous sonnet, in which he pointed out what was most worthy of imitation in the elder painters, recommends, significantly, "a little" of the grace of Parmigiano; thereby indicating, what we feel to be the truth, that he had *too much*.

GIORGIONE.

BORN 1478, DIED 1511.

THIS painter was another great *inventor;* one of those who stamped his own individuality on his art. He was essentially a poet, and a *subjective* poet, who fused his own being with all he performed and created: — if Raphael be the Shakspere, then GIORGIONE may be styled the Byron, of painting.

He was born at Castel Franco, a small town in the territory of Treviso, and his proper name was Giorgio Barbarelli. Nothing is known of his family or of his younger years, except that, having shown a strong disposition to art, he was brought, when a boy, to Venice, and placed under the tuition of Gian Bellini. As he grew up he was distinguished by his tall noble figure and the dignity of his deportment; and his companions called him Giorgione, or George the Great, by which nickname he has, after the Italian fashion, descended to posterity.

Giorgione appears to have been endowed by nature with an intense love of beauty and a sense of harmony which pervaded his whole being. He was famous as a

player and composer on the lute, to which he sung his own verses. In his works two characteristics prevail, sentiment and colour; both tinged by the peculiar temperament of the man: the sentiment is noble, but melancholy, and the colour decided, intense, and glowing. His execution had a freedom, a careless mastery of hand, or, to borrow the untranslateable Italian word, a *sprezzatura*, unknown before his time. The idea that he founded his style on that of Lionardo da Vinci cannot be entertained by those who have studied the works of both: nothing can be more distinct in character and feeling.

It is to be regretted that of one so interesting in his character and his works we know so little; yet more to be regretted that a being gifted with the passionate sensibility of a poet should have been employed chiefly in decorative painting, and that too confined to the outsides of the Venetian palaces. These creations have been destroyed by fire, ruined by time, or effaced by the damps of the Lagune. He appears to have early acquired fame in his art, and we find him in 1504 employed, together with Titian, in painting with frescoes the exterior of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi (the hall of Exchange belonging to the German merchants). That part intrusted to Giorgione he covered with the most beautiful and poetical figures; but the significance of the whole was soon after the artist's death forgotten; and Vasari tells us that in his time no one could interpret it. It appears to have been a sort of arabesque on a colossal scale.

Giorgione delighted in fresco as a vehicle, because

it gave him ample scope for that largeness and freedom of outline which characterised his manner; unhappily, of his numerous works, only the merest fragments remain. We have no evidence that he exercised his art elsewhere than at Venice, or that he ever resided out of the Venetian territory: in his pictures the heads, features, costumes, are all stamped with the Venetian character. He had no school, though, induced by his social and affectionate nature, he freely imparted what he knew, and often worked in conjunction with others. His love of music and his love of pleasure sometimes led him astray from his art, but were oftener his inspirers: both are embodied in his pictures, particularly his exquisite pastorals and concerts, over which, however, he has breathed that cast of thoughtfulness and profound feeling which, in the midst of harmony and beauty, is like a revelation or a prophecy of sorrow. All the rest of what is recorded concerning the life and death of Giorgione may be told in a few words. Among the painters who worked with him was Pietro Luzzo, of Feltri, near Venice, known in the history of art as Morto da Feltri, and mentioned by Vasari as the inventor, or rather reviver, of arabesque painting, in the antique style, which he had studied amid the dark vaults of the Roman ruins. This Morto, as Ridolfi relates, was the friend of Giorgione, and lived under the same roof with him. He took advantage of Giorgione's confidence to seduce and carry off from his house a girl whom he passionately loved. Wounded doubly by the falsehood of his mistress and the treachery of his friend, Giorgione sank into despair, and

soon afterwards died, at the early age of thirty-three. Morto da Feltri afterwârds fled from Venice, entered the army, and was killed at the battle of Zara in 1519. Such is the Venetian tradition.

Giorgione's genuine pictures are very rarely to be met with; of those ascribed to him the greater number were painted by Pietro della Vecchia, a Venetian, who had a peculiar talent for imitating Giorgione's manner of execution and style of colour. These imitations deceive picture dealers and collectors; they could not for one moment deceive those who had looked into the *feeling* impressed on Giorgione's works. The only picture which could have imposed on the true lover of Giorgione is that in Lord Ellesmere's Gallery, the Four Ages, by Titian, in which the tone of sentiment as well as the manner of Giorgione are so happily imitated that for many years it was attributed to him. It was painted by Titian when he was the friend and daily companion of Giorgione, and under the immediate influence of his feelings and genius.

We may divide the undoubted and existing pictures of Giorgione into three classes.

I. The historical subjects, which are very uncommon; such seem to have been principally confined to his frescoes, and have mostly perished.

In the Academy of Venice is preserved a so-called historical picture, wildly poetical in conception. It commemorates a fact—a dreadful tempest which occurred in 1340, and threatened to overwhelm the whole city of Venice. In Giorgione's picture the demons are represented in an infernal bark exciting the tempest,

while St. Mark, St. Nicholas, and St. George, the patron saints of Venice, seated in a small vessel tossed amid the waves, oppose with spiritual arms the powers of hell, and prevail against them.*

In our National Gallery there is a small historical picture, the Death of Peter, the Dominican friar and inquisitor, called St. Peter the Martyr, who was assassinated. This picture is not of much value, and a very inferior work of the master.

Sacred subjects of the usual kind were so seldom painted by Giorgione, that there are not perhaps half a dozen in existence.

II. There is a class of subjects which Giorgione represented with peculiar grace and felicity: they are in painting what idyls and lyrics are in poetry, and seem like direct inventions of the artist's own mind, though some are supposed to be scenes from Venetian tales and novels now lost. These generally represent groups of cavaliers and ladies seated in beautiful landscapes under the shade of trees, conversing or playing on musical instruments. Such pictures are not unfrequent, and have a particular charm, arising from the union of melancholy feeling with luxurious and festive enjoyment, and a mysterious allegorical significance now only to be surmised. In the collection of Lord Northwick, at Cheltenham, there is a most charming picture in this style: and in the possession of Mr. Cunningham there is another. To this class may also be referred the exquisite pastoral group of Jacob and Rachel

* This is the legend of the Fisherman and the Ring, which is given at full length in 'Sacred and Legendary Art,' 3rd edit., p. 151.

in the Dresden Gallery; and the three Wise Men of the East watching for the Star, in the Belvedere at Vienna.*

III. His portraits are magnificent. They have all, with the strongest resemblance to general nature, a grand ideal cast; for it was in the character of the man to idealise everything he touched. Very few of his portraits are now to be identified. Among the finest and most interesting may be mentioned his own portrait in the Munich Gallery, which has an expression of the profoundest melancholy. In the Imperial Gallery at Vienna—rich in his works—there is a picture representing a young man crowned with a garland of vine-leaves; another comes behind him with a concealed dagger, and appears to watch the moment to strike: the expression in the two heads can never be forgotten by those who have looked on them. The fine portrait of a cavalier, with a page riveting his armour, is well known: it is in the possession of the Earl of Carlisle, and styled, without much probability, Gaston de Foix. A beautiful little full-length figure in armour, now in the National Gallery, bears the same name; and is probably a study for a St. Michael or a St. George. Lord Byron has celebrated in some beautiful lines the impression made on his mind by a picture in the Manfrini Palace at Venice; but the poet errs in styling it the "portraits of Giorgione's son, and wife, and self:" Giorgione never had either son or wife. The picture alluded to represents a Venetian lady, a cavalier, and a page;—portraits evidently, but the names are unknown.

* Called the "*Astrologi*" and "*Die Feldmesser.*" Vide 'Legends of the Madonna,' 2nd edition, p. 222.

The striking characteristic of all Giorgione's pictures, whether portraits, ideal heads, or compositions, is the ineffaceable impression they leave on the memory—the impression of *reality*. In the apparent simplicity of the means through which this effect is produced, the few yet splendid colours, the vigorous decision of touch, the depth and tenderness of the sentiment, they remind us of the old religious music—a few simple notes, long sustained, deliciously blended, swelling into a rich, full, and perfect harmony, and melting into the soul.

Though Giorgione left no scholars, properly so called, he had many imitators, and no artist of his time exercised a more extensive and long-felt influence. He diffused that taste for vivid and warm colour which we see in contemporary and succeeding artists; and he tinged with his manner and feeling the whole Venetian school. Among those who were inspired by this powerful and ardent mind may be mentioned Sebastian del Piombo, of whom some account has already been given; Jacopo Palma, called *Old* Palma (*Palma Vecchio*); Paris Bordone; Pordenone; and, lastly, TITIAN, the great representative of the Venetian school. The difference between Giorgione and Titian, as colourists, seems to be this, that the colours of Giorgione appear as if lighted up from within, and those of Titian as if lighted from without. The epithet *fiery* or *glowing* would apply to Giorgione; the epithet *golden* would express the predominant hues of Titian.

TITIAN.

BORN 1477, DIED 1576.

TIZIANO VECELLI was born at Cadore in the Friuli, a district to the north of Venice, where the ancient family of the Vecelli had been long settled. There is something very amusing and characteristic in the first indication of his love of art; for while it is recorded of other young artists that they took a piece of charcoal or a piece of slate to trace the images in their fancy, we are told that the infant Titian, with an instinctive feeling prophetic of his future excellence as a colourist, used the expressed juice of certain flowers to paint a figure of a Madonna. When he was a boy of nine years old his father Gregorio carried him to Venice and placed him under the tuition of Sebastian Zuccato, a painter and worker in mosaic. He left this school for that of the Bellini, where the friendship and fellowship of Giorgione seems early to have awakened his mind to new ideas of art and colour. Albert Durer, who was at Venice in 1494, and again in 1507, also influenced him. At this time, when Titian and Giorgione were youths of eighteen and nineteen, they lived and worked together. It has been already related that they were employed in painting the frescoes of the Fondaco dei Tedeschi; the preference being given to Titian's performance, which represented the story of Judith, caused such a jealousy between the two friends, that they ceased to reside together; but at this time and for some years afterwards

49.—Tiziano Vecellio da Cadore, called Titian.

Agostino Carracci.

Engraved in Carlo Ridolfi's 'Maraviglie dell' Arte.'

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the influence of Giorgione on the mind and the style of Titian was such that it became difficult to distinguish their works; and on the death of Giorgione, Titian was required to complete his unfinished pictures. This great loss to Venice and the world left him in the prime of life without a rival. We find him for a few years chiefly employed in decorating the palaces of the Venetian nobles, both in the city and on the mainland. The first of his historical compositions which is celebrated by his biographers is the Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, a large picture, now in the Academy of Arts at Venice; and the first portrait recorded is that of Catherine, Queen of Cypress, of which numerous repetitions and copies were scattered over all Italy: there is a fine original in the Dresden Gallery. This unhappy Catherine Cornaro, the "daughter of St. Mark," having been forced to abdicate her crown in favour of the Venetian State, was at this time living in a sort of honourable captivity at Venice. She had been a widow for forty years, and he has represented her in deep mourning holding a rosary in her hand—the face still bearing traces of that beauty for which she was celebrated.

It appears that Titian was married about 1512; but of his wife we do not hear anything more: we know that her name was Cecilia (not Lucia, as she is sometimes called), and that she bore him three children, two sons, and a daughter called Lavinia. It seems probable, on a comparison of dates, that she died about the year 1530.

One of the earliest works on which Titian was engaged was the decoration of the convent of St. Antony

at Padua, in which he executed a series of frescoes from the life of St. Antony. Perugino was at Venice in 1515: he was then an old man; and looking round him at what the Venetian painters were achieving, he seems to have been reluctant to enter the lists with them, and went away without doing anything. In fact, Titian finished in the next year (1516) his famous Assumption of the Virgin for the Frari *—a picture of dazzling splendour. He was next summoned to Ferrara by the Duke Alphonso I., and was employed in his service for at least two years. He painted for this prince the beautiful picture of Bacchus and Ariadne, which is now in our National Gallery, and which presents on a small scale an epitome of all the beauties which characterise Titian, in the rich, picturesque, animated composition —in the ardour of Bacchus, who flings himself from his car to pursue Ariadne—in the dancing bacchanals, the frantic grace of the bacchante, and the little joyous satyr in front, trailing the head of the sacrifice.† He

* It is now in the Academy at Venice; well known from innumerable copies, and the fine engraving by Schiavone.

† This picture was suggested by a passage in Catullus. The poet, in the 'Marriage of Peleus and Thetis,' describes the couch of the goddess-bride as covered with rich tapestry "embroidered with figures in gorgeous colours, portrayed with wondrous art." It represents the story of Ariadne. In one part she is seen wandering on the shore of Naxos, after she has been abandoned by Theseus, broken-hearted, and appealing to all the gods against the perfidy of her lover. In another part Bacchus is seen approaching:—

"Young Iacchus, flushed
With bloom of youth, comes flying from above
With choirs of satyrs and Sileni born
In Indian Nyse: seeking thee he comes,
O Ariadne! with thy love inflamed!
They, blythe, from every side come revelling on,
Distraught with jocund madness, with a burst
Of Bacchic outcries, and with tossing heads!

Some

painted for the same prince two other festive subjects: one in which a nymph and two men are dancing, while another nymph lies asleep; and a third in which a number of children and Cupids are sporting round a statue of Venus: there are here upwards of sixty figures in every variety of attitude, some fluttering in the air, some climbing the fruit-trees, some shooting arrows, or embracing each other. This picture is known as the Sacrifice to the Goddess of Fertility: while it remained in Italy it was a study for the first painters, for Poussin, the Carracci, Albano, and Fiamingo the sculptor, so famous for his models of children.* At Ferrara, Titian also painted the well-known picture in the Louvre, called *Titian and his Mistress*, but which I have no doubt represents the Duke Alphonso and his second wife Laura; and here also he formed a friendship with the poet Ariosto, whose portrait he painted, and who, in return, consecrated to him two lines of the Orlando Furioso.

In 1519 he was invited to Rome by Leo X., for whom

> Some shake their ivy-shrouded spears; and some
> From hand to hand, in wild and fitful feast,
> Snatch the torn heifer's limbs: some gird themselves
> With twisted serpents; others bear along,
> In hollow arks, the mysteries of the god.
> . . . . . On timbrels others smite
> With tapering hands, or from smooth orbs of brass
> Clank forth a tinkling sound; and many blow
> On the hoarse horn; and the barbaric pipe
> Brays harsh upon the ear its dinning tune."

We have only to read this fancied description of a fancied picture in presence of the real picture to feel how Titian has animated the words into hues and forms, and rendered the whole scene, literally, line for line.

* These two pictures are now at Madrid. A good copy of the last used to hang in the dark at Hampton Court, and has been lately removed to Windsor.

Raphael, then in the zenith of his powers, was executing some of his finest works. It is curious to speculate what influence these two great and gifted men might have exercised on each other had they met; but it was not so decreed. Titian was strongly attached to his home and his friends at Venice; and to his birthplace, the little town of Cadore, he paid an annual summer visit. His long absence at Ferrara had wearied him of courts and princes; and, instead of going to Rome to swell the luxurious state of Leo X., he returned to Venice and remained there stationary for the next few years, enriching its palaces and churches with his magnificent works. These were so numerous that it would be in vain to attempt to give an account even of those considered as the finest among them.

The next event of Titian's life was his journey to Bologna in 1530. His wife had died in the early part of this year, leaving him a little daughter, and he probably needed some change to revive his cheerfulness. The Emperor Charles V. and Pope Clement VII. met at Bologna, each surrounded by a brilliant retinue of the most distinguished soldiers, statesmen, and scholars of Germany and Italy. Through the influence of Aretino, Titian was recommended to the Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, the Pope's nephew, through whose patronage he was introduced to the two potentates, who sat to him; one of the portraits of Clement VII., painted at this time, is now in the Bridgewater Gallery. Charles V. was represented in complete armour on horseback, and he was so satisfied with his portrait, that he became the zealous friend and patron of the painter. The portrait

of the Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici, in the Hungarian costume, now in the Pitti Palace, and that of Aretino in the same collection, belong to this period; both are masterpieces.

After a sojourn of some months at Bologna, Titian returned to Venice loaded with honours and rewards. There was no potentate, prince, or poet, or reigning beauty, who did not covet the honour of being immortalized by his pencil. He had up to this time managed his worldly affairs with great economy, but now he purchased for himself a house opposite to Murano, and lived splendidly, combining with the most indefatigable industry the liveliest enjoyment of existence; his favourite companions were the architect Sansovino and the witty profligate Pietro Aretino. Titian has often been reproached with his friendship for Aretino, and nothing can be said in his excuse, except that the proudest princes in Europe condescended to flatter and caress this unprincipled literary ruffian, who was pleased to designate himself as the "friend of Titian, and the scourge of princes." *

Thus in the practice of his art, in the society of his friends, and in the enjoyment of the pleasures of life, did Titian pass several years. In the year 1537 he painted for the Dominicans the Death of St. Peter Martyr † when attacked by assassins at the entrance of a wood; the resignation of the prostrate victim and the

* Titian's house and garden were near that part of Venice which is now called the *Fondamente Nuove*, with a vineyard stretching down to the shore. The house, though now blocked up with buildings, is still standing. See, in 'Memoirs and Essays, by Mrs. Jameson,' the Essay on the House of Titian.

† Unfortunately destroyed by fire, 1866.

ferocity of the murderer, the attendant flying "in the agonies of cowardice," with the trees waving their distracted boughs amid the violence of the tempest, have rendered this picture famous as a piece of scenic poetry as well as of dramatic expression.

In the middle of this century he was without a rival in his art. Lionardo, Raphael, Correggio, Andrea del Sarto, had all passed away. Titian himself, at the age of sixty, was no longer young, but he still retained all the vigour and the freshness of youth; neither eye nor hand, nor creative energy of mind, had failed him yet. He was again invited to Ferrara, and painted there the portrait of the old pope Paul III. He then visited Urbino, where he painted for the duke the famous Venus which hangs in the Tribune of the Florence Gallery, and many other pictures. He again, by order of Charles V., repaired to Bologna, and painted the emperor, standing, and by his side a favourite Irish wolf-dog: this picture was given by Philip IV. to our Charles I., but after his death was sold into Spain, and is now at Madrid.

Pope Paul III. invited him to Rome, whither he repaired in 1545. There he painted that wonderful picture of the old pope with his two nephews (the Duke Ottavio and Cardinal Farnese) which is now in the Museo at Naples.* The head of the pope is a miracle of character and expression: a keen-visaged, thin little man, with meagre fingers like birds' claws, and an eager cunning look, riveting the gazer like the eye of a snake—nature

* There are two alike in treatment. The finest is the one unfinished, which appears to be the first sketch from life. Another of Paul III. is in the Belvedere at Vienna.

itself!—and the pope had either so little or so much vanity as to be perfectly satisfied: he rewarded the painter munificently; he even offered to make his son Pomponio Bishop of Ceneda, which Titian had the good sense to refuse. While at Rome he painted several pictures for the Farnese family, among them the Venus and Adonis, of which a repetition is in our National Gallery; a Danaë which excited the admiration of Michael Angelo; and the portrait of Aretino which is now in the Pitti Palace, a marvel of life and character. At this time Titian was in his seventieth year.

He next, by command of Charles V., repaired to Augsburgh, where the emperor held his court: eighteen years had elapsed since he first sat to Titian, and he was now broken by the cares of government—far older at fifty than the painter at seventy. It was at Augsburgh that the incident occurred which has been so often related: Titian dropped his pencil, and Charles, taking it up and presenting it, replied to the artist's excuses that "Titian was worthy of being served by Cæsar." This pretty anecdote is not without its parallel in modern times. When Sir Thomas Lawrence was painting at Aix-la-Chapelle, as he stooped to place a picture on his easel, the Emperor of Russia anticipated him, and taking it up adjusted it himself; but we do not hear that he made any speech on the occasion. When at Augsburgh, Titian was ennobled and created a count of the empire, with a pension of two hundred gold ducats, and his son Pomponio was appointed canon of the cathedral of Milan. After the abdication and death of Charles V., Titian continued in great favour with his

successor Philip II., for whom he painted several pictures. It is not true, however, that Titian visited Spain: the assertion that he did so rests on the sole authority of Palomino, a Spanish writer on art, and, though wholly unsupported by evidence, has been copied from one book into another. Later researches have proved that Titian returned from Augsburgh to Venice;* and an uninterrupted series of letters and documents, with dates of time and place, remain to show that, with the exception of this visit to Augsburgh and another to Vienna, he resided constantly in Italy, and principally at Venice, from 1550 to his death. Notwithstanding the compliments and patronage and nominal rewards he received from the Spanish court, Titian was worse off under Philip II. than he had been under Charles V.: his pension was constantly in arrears; the payments for his pictures evaded by the officials; and we find the great painter constantly presenting petitions and complaints in moving terms, which always obtained gracious but illusive answers. Philip II., who commanded the riches of the Indies, was for many years a debtor to Titian for at least two thousand gold crowns; and his accounts were not settled at the time of his death. For our Queen Mary of England, who wished to patronize a man favoured by her husband, Titian painted several pictures, some of which were in the possession of Charles I.; others had been

* It appears that the wonderful picture of Christ and the Pharisee (Il Cristo della Moneta), now at Dresden, was painted during this visit to Augsburgh, in 1548. The picture of the same subject in our National Gallery is a coarse and immeasurably inferior work, and, as I suppose, of a later period.

carried to Spain after the death of Mary, and are now in the Royal Gallery at Madrid.

Besides the pictures painted by command for royal and noble patrons, Titian, who was unceasingly occupied, had always a great number of pictures in his house which he presented to his friends, or to the officers and attendants of the court, as a means of procuring their favour. There is extant a letter of Aretino, in which he describes the scene which took place when the emperor summoned his favourite painter to attend the court at Augsburgh in 1550. "It was," he says, "the most flattering testimony to his excellence to behold, as soon as it was known that the divine painter was sent for, the crowds of people running to obtain, if possible, the productions of his art; and how they endeavoured to purchase the pictures, great and small, and everything that was in the house, at any price; for everybody seems assured that his august majesty will so treat his Apelles that he will no longer condescend to exercise his pencil except to oblige him."

The "Venus and Adonis" now in our National Gallery was painted by Titian for Philip II. in 1554, when he was in his seventy-eighth year, and the Cenacolo now at Madrid in 1565, when he was in his eighty-ninth year; but time passed on, and seemed to have no power to quench the ardour of this wonderful old man. He was eighty-one when he painted the Martyrdom of St. Lawrence, one of his largest and grandest compositions. The Magdalene, the half-length figure with uplifted streaming eyes, which he sent to Philip II., was executed even later: and it was not till he was

approaching his ninetieth year that he showed in his works symptoms of enfeebled powers; and then it seemed as if sorrow rather than time had reached him and conquered him at last. He had lost his daughter Lavinia, who had been his model for many beautiful pictures. The death of many friends, the companions of his convivial hours, left him "alone in his glory;" and he found in his beloved art the only refuge from grief. His son Pomponio was still the same worthless profligate in age that he had been in youth: his son Orazio attended upon him with truly filial duty and affection, and under his father's tuition had become an accomplished artist; but as they always worked together, and on the same canvas, his works are not to be distinguished from his father's. Titian was likewise surrounded by painters who, without being precisely his scholars, had assembled from every part of Europe to profit by his instructions.* The early morning and the evening hour found him at his easel; or lingering in his little garden (where he had feasted with Aretino and Sansovino, and Bembo and Ariosto, and "the most gracious Virginia," and "the most beautiful Violante"), and gazing on the setting sun, with a thought perhaps of his own long and bright career fast hastening to its close;—not that such anticipations clouded his cheerful spirit—buoyant to the last! In 1574, when he was in his ninety-seventh year, Henry III. of France landed at Venice on his way from Poland, and was magni-

* It seems, however, generally admitted that Titian, either from impatience or jealousy, or both, was a very bad instructor in his art.

ficently entertained by the Republic. On this occasion the king, attended by a numerous suite of princes and nobles, visited Titian at his own house. Titian entertained them with splendid hospitality; and when the king asked the price of some pictures which pleased him, he presented them as a gift to his majesty, and every one praised his easy and noble manners and his generous bearing.

Two years more passed away, and the hand did not yet tremble, nor did the eye wax dim. When the plague broke out in Venice, in 1576, the nature of the distemper was at first mistaken, and the most common precautions neglected; the contagion spread, and Titian and his son were among those who perished: every one had fled, and before life was extinct some ruffians entered his chamber and carried off, before his eyes, his money, jewels, and some of his pictures. His death took place on the 9th of September, 1576. A law had been made during the plague that none should be buried in the churches, but that all the dead bodies should be carried beyond the precincts of the city; an exception, however, even in that hour of terror and anguish, was made in favour of Titian: his remains were borne with honour to the tomb and deposited in the church of Santa Maria de' Frari, for which he had painted his famous Assumption. There he lies beneath a plain black marble slab, on which is simply inscribed

"TIZIANO VECELLIO."

In the year 1794 the citizens of Venice resolved to erect a noble and befitting monument to his memory.

Canova made the design;—but the troubles which intervened, and the extinction of the Republic, prevented the execution of this project. Canova's magnificent model was appropriated to another purpose, and now forms the cenotaph of the Archduchess Christina, in the church of the Augustins at Vienna.

This was the life and death of the famous Titian. He was pre-eminently the painter of nature; but to him nature was clothed in a perpetual garb of beauty, or rather, to him nature and beauty were one. In historical compositions and sacred subjects he has been rivalled and surpassed, but as a portrait-painter never; and his portraits of celebrated persons have at once the truth and the dignity of history. It would be in vain to attempt to give any account of his works; numerous as they are, not all that are attributed to him in various galleries are his: many are by Palma, Bonifazio, and others his contemporaries, who imitated his manner with more or less success. As almost every gallery in Europe, public and private, contains pictures attributed to him, I shall not attempt to enumerate even the acknowledged *chefs-d'œuvre*. It will be interesting, however, to give some account of those of his works contained in our national and royal galleries. In our National Gallery there are five, of which the Bacchus and Ariadne, the Venus and Adonis, and the Ganymede, are fair examples of his power in the poetical department of his art. The lovely little picture of Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, which belonged to Mr. Rogers, and used to hang in the poet's drawing-room, he

bequeathed to the National Gallery in 1855: but we still want one of his inestimable portraits. In the gallery at Hampton Court there are seven or eight pictures attributed to him, most of them in a miserably ruined condition. The finest of these is a portrait of a man in black, with a white shirt seen above his vest up to his throat; in his right hand a red book, his forefinger between the leaves: it is called in the old catalogues Alessandro de' Medici, and has been engraved under the name of Boccaccio;* but it has no pretensions to either name: it is a wonderful piece of life. There is also a lovely figure of a standing Lucretia, about half-life size, with very little drapery—not at all characteristic of the modest Lucretia who arranged her robes that she might fall with decorum: she holds with her left hand a red veil over her face, and in the right a dagger with which she is about to stab herself. This picture belonged to Charles I., and came to England with the Mantua Gallery in 1629; it was sold in 1650, after the king's death, for 200*l.* (a large price for the time), and afterwards restored. In the collection at Windsor there are the portraits of Titian and Andrea Franceschini, half-length, in the same picture. Franceschini was chancellor of the Republic, and distinguished for his literary attainments; he is seen in front in a robe of crimson (the habit of a cavaliero of St. Mark), and holds a paper in his hand. The acute and refined

* The engraving, which is most admirable, was executed by Cornelius Vischer, when the picture was in Holland, in the possession of a great collector of that time, named Van Keynst, from whom the States of Holland purchased it with several others, and presented them to Charles I.

features have that expression of mental power which Titian, without any apparent effort, could throw into a head: the fine old face and flowing beard of Titian appear behind. This picture belonged to Charles I., and was sold after his death for 112*l.*; it has been called in various catalogues Titian and Aretino, which is an obvious mistake, and yet in all the catalogues remains uncorrected.

In the Louvre there are twenty-two pictures by Titian; in the Vienna Gallery fifty-two. The Madrid Gallery contains most of the fine pictures painted for Charles V. and Philip II.

Before I quit the subject of Titian, I may remark that a collection of his engraved portraits would form a complete historical gallery illustrative of the times in which he lived. Not only was his art at the service of princes and their favourite beauties, but it was ever ready to immortalize the features of those who were the objects of his own affection and admiration. Unfortunately it was not his custom to inscribe on the canvas the names of those who sat to him: many of the most glorious heads he ever painted remain to this hour unknown. Amid all their *reality* (and nothing in painting ever so conveyed the idea of a presence) they have a particular dignity which strikes us with respect; we would fain interrogate them, while they look at us lifelike, grandly, calmly, like beings of another world; they seem to recognise us, but we can never recognise them: only we feel the certainty that just as they now look, so they lived and looked in long past times. Such a portrait is

that in the Hampton Court Gallery; that grave dark man,—in figure and attitude so tranquil, so contemplative, but in his eyes and on his lips a revelation of feeling and eloquence. And such a picture is that of the lady in the Sciarra Palace at Rome, called expressly "La Bella di Tiziano." It has no other name, but no one ever looked at it without the wish to carry it away; and no anonymous portrait has ever been so multiplied by copies. But leaving these, I will subjoin here a short list of those great and celebrated personages who are known to have sat to Titian, and whose portraits remain to us, a precious legacy, and forming the truest commentary on their lives, deeds, and works.

Charles V. Titian painted this emperor several times: the first time in 1530, in a full suit of armour, when he was a young man full of health and conscious of power; the last time in 1550, when he was a broken-down and feeble old man, seated in an arm-chair in a velvet dressing gown. He has always a grave, even melancholy, expression; very short hair and beard; a large square brow; and the full lips and projecting under-jaw which became a deformity in his descendants.

His wife, the Empress Isabella, holding flowers in her hand.

Philip II.: like his father, but uglier, more melancholy, less intellectual. The Duke of Devonshire has a fine full-length, in rich armour. There is a very good one at Florence, in the Pitti Palace; and another at Madrid. In the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge is the picture called "Philip II. and the Princess Eboli," of which there are several repetitions.

Francis I.: half-length, in profile; now in the Louvre. Titian did not paint this king from nature, but from a medal which was sent to him to copy.

The Emperor Ferdinand I.

The Emperor Rudolph II.

The Sultan Solyman II. His wife Roxana. (These are engraved after Titian, but from what originals we know not: they cannot be from nature.)

The Popes Julius II. (doubtful), Clement VII., Paul III., and Paul IV.

All the Doges of Venice of his time.

Francesco, Duke of Urbino, and his Duchess Eleonora: two wonderful portraits, now in the Florence Gallery.

The Cardinal Ippolito de' Medici (in the Louvre, and in the Pitti Palace).

The Constable de Bourbon.

The famous and cruel Duke of Alva.

Andrea Doria, Doge of Genoa.

Ferdinand Leyva, who commanded at the battle of Pavia.

Alphonso d'Avalos (in the Louvre).

Isabella d' Este, Marchioness of Mantua.

Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara; his first wife, Lucrezia Borgia; and his second wife, Laura Eustochia.* (In the Dresden Gallery there is a picture by Titian, in which Alphonso is presenting his wife Lucrezia to the Madonna.)

Cesar Borgia. Catherine Cornaro, Queen of Cyprus.

The poet Ariosto, once in the Manfrini Palace at Venice; now in England.

Bernardo Tasso.

* Vide 'Sacred and Legendary Art,' 3rd edition, p. 573.

Cardinal Bembo. Cardinal Sforza. Cardinal Farnese. Count Castiglione.

Pietro Aretino: several times. (The finest is at Florence in the Pitti Palace; another is at Munich. The engravings by Bonasone of Aretino and Cardinal Bembo rank among the most exquisite works of art. There are impressions of both in the British Museum.)

Sansovino, the famous Venetian architect.

The Cornaro family (in the possession of the Duke of Northumberland)

Fracastaro, a famous Latin poet.

Irene da Spilemborgo, a young girl who had distinguished herself as a musician, a poetess, and to whom Titian himself had given lessons in painting. She died at the age of eighteen.

Andrea Vesalio, who has been called the father of anatomical science—the particular friend of Titian, and his instructor in anatomy. He was accused falsely of having put a man to death for anatomical purposes, and condemned. Philip II., unwilling to sacrifice so accomplished a man to mere popular prejudice, commuted his punishment to a forced pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He obeyed the sentence; but on his return he was wrecked on the island of Zante, and died there of hunger in 1564. (This magnificent portrait, which Titian seems to have painted with enthusiasm, is in the Pitti Palace at Florence.)

Titian painted several portraits of himself, but none which represent him young. In the fine portrait at Florence he is about fifty, and in the other known repre-

sentations he is an old man, with an aquiline nose and long flowing beard. Of his daughter Lavinia there are many portraits. She was her father's favourite model, being very beautiful in face and form. In a famous picture, now at Berlin, she is represented lifting with both hands a dish filled with fruits. There are four repetitions of this subject: in one the fruits are changed into a casket of jewels (in the collection of Lord de Grey); in another she becomes the daughter of Herodias, and the dish bears the head of John the Baptist. All are striking, graceful, full of animation.

The only exalted personage of his time and country whom Titian did not paint was Cosmo I., Grand-Duke of Florence. In passing through Florence, in 1548, Titian requested the honour of painting the Grand-Duke: the offer was declined. It is worthy of remark that Titian had painted, many years before, the father of Cosmo, Giovanni de' Medici, the famous captain of the *Bande Neri;* but this appears to have been from a mask in plaster sent to him after the death of Giovanni.

THE VENETIAN PAINTERS

OF THE

SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

TITIAN was the last great name of the earlier schools of Italy—the last really *great* painter whom she produced. After him came many who were good artists, excellent artificers; but, compared with the heaven-endowed creators in art—the poet-painters who had gone before them—they were mere mechanics, the best of them. No more Raphaels, no more Titians, no more Michael Angelos, before whom princes stood uncovered! but very good painters, bearing the same relation to their wondrous predecessors that the poets, wits, and playwrights of Queen Anne's time bore to Shakspere. There was, however, an intervening period between the death of Titian and the foundation of the Carracci school, a sort of interregnum, during which the art of painting sank to the lowest depths of laboured inanity and inflated mannerism. In the middle of the sixteenth century Italy swarmed with painters: these go under the general name of the *mannerists*, because they all imitated the *manner* of some one of the great masters who had gone before them. There were imitators of Michael Angelo, of Raphael, of Correggio:—Vasari and Bronzino; at

Florence; the two brothers Taddeo and Federigo Zuccaro, and the Cavalier d'Arpino, at Rome; Federigo Barroccio, of Urbino; Luca Cambiasi, of Genoa; and hundreds of others, who covered with frescoes the walls of villas, palaces, churches, and produced some fine and valuable pictures, and many pleasing and graceful ones, and many more that were mere vapid or exaggerated repetitions of worn-out subjects. And patrons were not wanting, nor industry, nor science; nothing but original and elevated feeling—"the inspiration and the poet's dream."

But in the Venetian school still survived this inspiration, this vital and creative power, when it seemed extinct everywhere besides. From 1540 to 1590 the Venetians were the only *painters* worthy the name in Italy. This arose from the elementary principle early infused into the Venetian artists—the principle of looking to Nature, and imitating her, instead of imitating others and one another. Thus, as every man who looks to Nature looks at her through his own eyes, a certain degree of individuality was retained even in the decline of the art. There were some who tried to look at Nature in the same point of view as Titian, and these are generally included under the denomination of the "School of Titian," though in fact he had no *school* properly so called.

Morone was a portrait-painter who in some of his heads equalled Titian. We have in England only one known picture by him, but it is a masterpiece—the portrait of a Jesuit, in the gallery of the Duke of Suther-

50.—G. Battista Morone.

From an old Engraving.

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51.—Bonifazio.

Carlo Ridolfi.

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land, which for a long time went by the name of Titian's Schoolmaster; it represents a grave, acute-looking man, holding a book in his hand, which he has just closed; his finger is between the leaves, and, leaning from his chair, he seems about to address you.

> "The very life is warm upon that lip,
> The fixture of the eye has motion in't,
> And we are mock'd by art!"

Bonifazio, who had studied under Palma and Titian, painted many pictures which are frequently attributed to both these masters. For example, the "Finding of Moses," in the Brera at Milan, was long attributed to Giorgione;* the beautiful Holy Family in the Louvre (82) was generally supposed to be by Palma; and many of his pictures pass under the name of Titian. Very little is known of this painter. Ridolfi mentions that in his time six long pictures by Bonifazio were carried to England, representing the Triumph of Love, of Chastity, of Time, of Fame, of Death, and, last, the Triumph of Religion; forming a series suggested by the well-known

* It may be called rather a *romantic* and poetical version than an historical representation of the scene. It would shock Sir Gardner Wilkinson. In the centre sits the princess under a tree; she looks with surprise and tenderness on the child, which is brought to her by one of her attendants: the squire or seneschal of the princess, with knights and ladies, stand around; on one side two lovers are seated on the grass; on the other are musicians and singers, pages with dogs. All the figures are in the Venetian costume; the colouring is splendid, and the grace and harmony of the whole composition is even the more enchanting from the *naïveté* of the conception. This picture, like many others of the same age and style, reminds us of those poems and tales of the middle ages in which David and Jonathan figure as "*preux chevaliers*," and Sir Alexander of Macedon and Sir Paris of Troy fight tournaments in honour of ladies' eyes and the "blessed Virgin." They must be tried by their own aim and standard not by the severity of antiquarian criticism.

'Trionfi' of Petrarch, and often represented by the Italian painters,—but I can find no account of these pictures.

A much finer painter was Alessandro Bonvicino, called Il Moretto, who also studied under Titian, but, by uniting with Venetian colour and sentiment something of the dignity of the Roman school and a depth of religious feeling which seems to have belonged to his individual character, he surpassed in some of his pictures every painter of his time except Titian. Very little is known of his life, except that he chiefly worked in his native city Brescia and its neighbourhood. There is a rich purple glow over his pictures, which distinguishes them from all others I have seen. The Santa Giustina, at Vienna, long attributed to Pordenone, and a magnificent altarpiece in the possession of Lord Northwick, are the finest I can remember, besides those in the churches at Brescia.

Andrea Schiavone, whose elegant pictures are often met with in collections, was a poor boy who began the world as an assistant mason and house-painter, and who became an artist from the love of art; but by some fatality, or some quality of mind which we are wont to call a *fatality*, he remained always poor. He painted numerous pictures, which others obtained and sold again for high prices, enriching themselves at the expense of his toil of hand and head. At length he died, and in such wretched circumstances, that he was buried by the charity of a few friends. In general the Venetian painters were joyous beings; Schiavone was a rare and melancholy exception. Very different was the temper

52.—Alessandro Bonvicino—Il Moretto.

Engraved in Carlo Ridolfi's 'Maraviglie dell' Arte.'

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53.—Andrea Schiavone.

Engraved in Carlo Ridolfi's 'Maraviglie dell' Arte.'

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54.—Paris Bordone.

Engraved by Picinus, in Carlo Ridolfi's 'Maraviglie dell' Arte.'

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55.—Jacopo Palma, called Palma Vecchio.

Engraved in Carlo Ridolfi's 'Maraviglie dell' Arte.'

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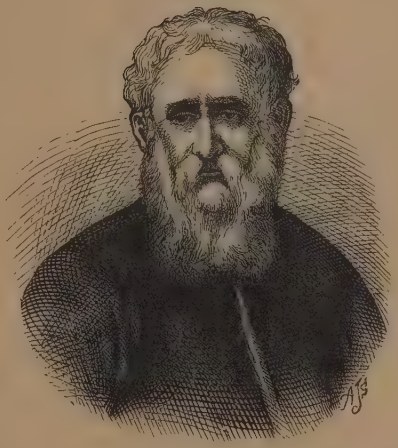
and the fate of PARIS BORDONE of Treviso, a man without much genius, weak in drawing, capricious or commonplace in invention, without fire or expression, but a divine colourist, and stamping on his pictures his own buoyant, life-enjoying nature; in this he was like Titian, but utterly inferior in all other respects. Some of his portraits are very beautiful, particularly those of his women, which have been often mistaken for Titian's.

The elder PALMA is also considered as a scholar of Titian, though deriving as little from his personal instruction as did Tintoretto, Bordone, and others of the school. The date of his birth has been rendered uncertain by the mistakes of various authors, who confounded the elder and the younger Palma; but it appears that he was born between 1473 and 1480,—that he was, in fact, about the same age as Titian. In some pictures he has shown the dignity of Titian, in others a touch of the melancholy sentiment of Giorgione. Not half the pictures attributed to Palma Vecchio are by him. We have not one in our National Gallery; and those at Hampton Court which are attributed to him are not genuine—mere third-rate pictures of the Venetian school. On the whole he was a most charming painter, and his religious subjects in that pastoral style which belonged to the Venetian school are beyond expression lovely—one in the Louvre (277) and one at Dresden are examples. This painter had three daughters of remarkable beauty. Violante, the eldest and most beautiful, is said to have been loved by Titian. She was frequently painted by her father, and it is a tradition that she was the model of his St. Barbara, in the S. Maria-Formosa at

Venice; his masterpiece—and one of the finest pictures in the world. We have the three daughters of Palma, painted by himself, in the Vienna gallery; one, a most lovely creature, with long light-brown hair, and a violet in her bosom, is without doubt Titian's Violante. In the Dresden gallery are the same three beautiful girls in one picture, the head in the centre being *the* Violante.

It remains to give some account of two remarkable Venetian painters, who were contemporaries of Titian, but could hardly be called his rivals, his equals, or his imitators. They were both inferior to him, but original men in their different styles.

The first was TINTORETTO, born in 1512; his real name was Jacopo Robusti. His father was a dyer (in Italian, *Tintore*); hence he received in childhood the diminutive nickname *Il Tintoretto*, by which he is best known to us. He began, like many other painters whose genius we have recorded, by drawing all kinds of objects and figures on the walls of his father's house. The dyer, being a man of sense, did not attempt to oppose his son's predilection for art, but procured for him the best instruction his means would allow, and even sent him to study under Titian. This did not avail him much, for that most excellent painter was by no means a good instructor. Tintoretto, however, did not lose courage; he pursued his studies, and after a few years set up an academy of his own, and on the wall of his painting-room he placed the following inscription, as being expressive of the principles he intended to follow: "*Il disegno di Michel Agnolo: il colorito di Tiziano*" (the drawing of Michael Angelo, and the colouring of Titian). Tintoretto was a man of extraordinary talent, unequalled for



56.—Jacopo Robusti, called Il Tintoretto.

By himself, in the Uffizi Gallery.

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the quickness of his invention and the facility and rapidity of his execution; with an original, often eccentric, way of treating his subjects which set religious conventionalities at nought. I remember, as instances, an Annunciation, in which the Angel Gabriel, instead of approaching in the usual manner, comes rushing down from Heaven into the presence of the Virgin Mary with a whole host of attendant spirits; and no one who has seen his Christ before Pilate, in the chapel of St. Roch at Venice, will ever forget that pale pathetic figure. It frequently happened that he would not give himself the trouble to make any design or sketch for his picture, but composed as he went along, throwing his figures on the canvas, and painting them in at once, with wonderful power and truth, considering the little time and pains they cost him. But this want of study was fatal to his real greatness. He is the most unequal of painters. In his compositions we find often the grossest faults in close proximity with the highest beauty. Now he would paint a picture almost equal to Titian; then produce one so coarse and careless, that it seemed to justify Titian's expression of a "dauber." He abused his mechanical power by the utmost recklessness of pencil; but then, again, his wonderful talent redeemed him, and he would enchant his fellow-citizens by the grandeur, the dramatic vivacity, the gorgeous colours, and the luxuriant invention displayed in some of his vast compositions. The larger the space he had to fill, the more he seemed at home; his small pictures are seldom good. His portraits in general are magnificent; less refined and dignified than those of Titian, less intellectual, but quite as full of life.

Tintoretto painted an amazing number of pictures, and of an amazing size—one of them, the great Crucifixion, at Venice, is seventy-four feet in length and thirty feet in height: here the Passion of our Saviour is represented like a vast theatrical scene, crowded with groups of figures on foot and on horseback, exhibiting the greatest variety of movement and expression. Another very large picture, called the Miracle of St. Mark, is in the Academy of Venice: a certain slave having become a Christian, and having persevered in paying his devotions at the shrine of St. Mark, is condemned to the torture by his heathen lord; but just as he is bound and prostrate St. Mark descends from above to aid his votary; the executioner is seen raising the broken instruments of torture, and a crowd of people look on in various attitudes of wonder, pity, interest. The whole picture glows with colour and movement.*

In our National Gallery we have only one small unimportant work by Tintoretto, but there are ten or eleven in the Royal Galleries; he was a favourite painter of Charles I., who purchased many of his works from Venice. Two pictures which belonged to this king are now at Hampton Court,—Esther fainting before Ahasuerus, and the Nine Muses. They have suffered terribly from audacious restorers; but in this last picture the figure of the Muse on the right, turning her back, is in a grand style, not unworthy, in its large, bold, yet graceful drawing, of the hand of Michael Angelo himself. In the same collection are three very fine portraits.

* The beautiful study for this picture once belonged to the poet Rogers, and is now in the possession of Miss Burdett Coutts.

57.—Paolo Caliari, called Paul Veronese.

Carlo Ridolfi.

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Tintoretto died in 1588. His daughter, Marietta Robusti, whose talent for painting was sedulously cultivated by her father, has left some excellent portraits; and in her own time obtained such celebrity that the kings of France and Spain invited her to their courts with the most tempting offers of patronage, but she would never leave her father and her native Venice. Ridolfi speaks also of her rare skill in music. She died at the age of thirty.

Paul Cagliari of Verona, better known as Paul Veronese, was born in that city in 1530, the son of a sculptor, who taught him early to draw and to model; but the genius of the pupil was so diametrically opposed to this style of art, that he soon quitted the studio of his father for that of his uncle Antonio Badile, a very good painter, from whom he learned that florid grace in composition which he afterwards carried out in a manner so consummate and so characteristic. At that time Verona, like all the other cities of Italy, could boast of a crowd of painters; and Paul Cagliari, finding that he could not stand against so many competitors, repaired to Venice, where he remained for some time, studying the works of Titian and Tintoret, but without attracting much attention himself till he had painted on the roof of the church of St. Sebastian the history of Esther. This was a subject well calculated to call forth his particular talent in depicting the gay, the sumptuous accessories of courtly pomp—banquet scenes, processions, &c.; and from this time he was continually employed by the splendour-loving citizens of Venice, who delighted in his luxuriant magnificence, and over-

looked, or perhaps did not perceive, his thousand sins against fact, probability, costume, time, and place. We are obliged to do the same thing in these days, if we would duly appreciate the works of this astonishing painter. We must shut our eyes to the violation of all proprieties of chronology and costume, and see only the abounding life, the wondrous variety of dignified and expressive figures crowded into his scenes (we may a little marvel how they got there), and the prodigality of light and colours, all harmonised by a mellowness of tone which renders them most attractive to the eye. To give an idea of Paul Veronese's manner of treating a subject, we will take one of his finest and most characteristic pictures, the Marriage of Cana, which was painted for the refectory of the convent of San Giorgio at Venice, and is now in the Louvre. It is not less than thirty feet long and twenty feet high, and contains about one hundred and thirty figures, life size. The Marriage Feast of the Galilean citizen. is represented with a pomp worthy of "Ormuz or of Ind:" a sumptuous hall of the richest architecture; lofty columns, long lines of marble balustrades rising against the sky; a crowd of guests splendidly attired, some wearing orders of knighthood, are seated at tables covered with gorgeous vases of gold and silver, attended by slaves, jesters, pages, and musicians. In the midst of all this dazzling pomp, this display of festive enjoyment, these moving figures, these lavish colours in glowing approximation, we begin after a while to distinguish the principal personages, our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, the Twelve Apostles, mingled with Venetian senators and ladies clothed in the rich costume of the sixteenth cen-

tury—monks, friars, poets, artists, all portraits of personages existing in his own time; while in a group of musicians he has introduced himself and Tintoretto playing the violoncello, while Titian plays the bass. The bride in this picture is said to be the portrait of Eleanor of Austria, the sister of Charles V., and second wife of Francis I., of whom there is a most beautiful portrait at Hampton Court. There is a series of these Scriptural banquet-scenes, painted by Paul Veronese, all in the same extraordinary style, but varied with the utmost richness of fancy, invention, and colouring: Christ entertained by Levi, now in the Academy of Venice; the Supper in the house of Simon the Pharisee, with Mary Magdalene at the feet of our Saviour, now in the Turin Gallery, of which the first sketch, a magnificent piece of colour, was in the possession of Mr. Rogers;* and the Supper at Emmaus, in which he has introduced his wife and others of his family as spectators.

The Companions of St. Sebastian, Marcus and Marcellinus, preparing for their Martyrdom, which is now in the church of San Sebastiano at Venice, is, for the expression of life, passion, and dramatic power, one of the grandest pictures in the world: it is esteemed the masterpiece of the painter.

Paul Veronese died in 1588. He was a man of amiable manners, of a liberal, generous spirit, and extremely pious. When he painted for churches and convents, he frequently accepted very small prices, sometimes merely the value of his canvas and colours.

* It is now in the possession of Miss Burdett Coutts.

for that stupendous picture in the Louvre, the Marriage of Cana, he received not more than 40*l.* of our money.

He had sons and relations who were educated in his atelier and assisted in painting his great pictures, and who after his death continued to carry on a sort of manufactory of pictures in the same magnificent ornamental style; but they were far inferior painters, and had not, like him, the power of redeeming gross faults of judgment and taste by a vivid imagination and strong feeling of character.

Almost all galleries and collections contain specimens of the works of this splendid and popular painter; but the finest are in the churches at Venice, in the Louvre, and in the Dresden gallery, where there are fifteen of his pictures.

In our National Gallery we may now boast of possessing one of his grandest and most celebrated works, "The Family of Darius at the feet of Alexander," once the glory of the Pisani Palace at Venice, and which was in the possession of the family from the hour it was painted till it passed into our possession. It is easy to criticise the anachronisms in this picture; but Paul Veronese did not think about anachronisms, and its excellence is such that, in the words of a great critic, "in its presence we forget for a time all other productions in painting." We have also a fine picture of the Consecration of St. Nicholas as Bishop of Myra;* and a large altarpiece of the Worship of the Magi. The little sketch of Europa is a study for the splendid picture now at Verona.

Before we close the list of the elder painters of Italy

* Vide 'Sacred and Legendary Art,' 3rd edition, p 450.

we must mention as flourishing at this time the Da Ponte family of Bassano. GIACOMO or JACOPO DA PONTE, called Old Bassano, was the head of it. His father had been a painter before him, and he, with his four sons, Leandro, Francesco, Gian Battista, and Girolamo, set up in their native town of Bassano a kind of manufactory of pictures which were sold in the fairs and markets of the neighbouring cities, and became popular all over the north of Italy. The Bassani were among the earliest painters of the *genre* style; they treated sacred and solemn subjects in a homely familiar manner which was pleasing and intelligible to the people, and, at the same time, with a power of imitation, a light and spirited execution, and, in particular, a gem-like radiance of colour which fascinates even judges of art. There are pictures of the elder Bassano which at the first glance remind one of a handful of rubies and emeralds. His best and largest works are at Bassano; his small pictures are numerous, and scattered through most galleries. He painted sheep, cattle, and poultry well, and was fond of introducing them in the pastoral scenes of the Old Testament, where they are appropriate: sometimes, unhappily, where they are least appropriate they are the principal objects. His scenery and grouping have a rural character; and his personages, even sacred and heroic, look like peasants. They are not vulgar, but rustic. The same kind of spirit informed the Bassani that afterwards informed the Dutch school—the imitation of familiar objects without elevation and without selection; but the nature of Italy was as different from that of Holland as Bassano is different from Jan Steen.

Like all the Venetians, the Bassani were good portrait painters. We have a fine portrait by Jacopo Bassano in our National Gallery, and at Hampton Court several very fine and characteristic pictures, which will give an excellent idea of his general manner; the best are Jacob's Journey and the Deluge. Mr. Rogers possessed the two best pictures of this artist now in England; they are small, but most beautiful, vivid as gems in point of colour, with more dignity and feeling than is usual: the subjects are, the Good Samaritan, and Lazarus at the door of the Rich Man. Nothing could tempt Bassano from the little native town where he flourished, grew rich, and brought up a numerous family: he died in 1592.

All these men had original genius and that individuality of character which lends a vital interest to all productions of art, whether the style be elevated and ideal or confined to the imitation of common nature: but to them succeeded a race of *mannerists* and imitators, so that about the close of the sixteenth century all originality seemed extinguished at Venice, as well as everywhere else: and here we close the history of the earlier painters of Italy.

THE END.

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